AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

March 2011

The Ahmadiyya GAZETTE USA

An informational, literary, educational, and training magazine of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

Masih Mau'ood Edition

Maulana Naseem Mahdi, Missionary Incharge and Na'lb Ameer USA
Addressing West Coast Jalsa Salana, Held at Baitul Hameed, Chino, CA

Al Hilal

Spring 2011

Theme:

The Beautiful Holy Qur'an

- What are your favorite verses of the Holy Qur'an?
- What makes them important to you?
- What would you like others to know about your Holy Book?
- Do you know facts about the Qur'an or special ways to treat this special book?
- Can you describe what makes it the most read book in the entire world?

- *As always we welcome artwork, poetry, short stories and photography.*
- *Adult submissions written with a young audience in mind are also encouraged.*
- *Parents please encourage your children to submit their own original work and include your name if you have assisted in writing the piece.*
- *All submissions must include author's name, age, Jama'at and contact phone number as well as any collaborators who assisted in the writing of the piece.*

Email submissions to:
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Deadline:
March 15th 2011

An educational and spiritual monthly publication

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, USA

March 2011

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw:	sallallahu alaihi wasallam (Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as:	alaihissalam (Peace be upon him)
ra:	radhi allahu 'anhu (May Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh:	rahimahullahu ta'ala (May Allah shower mercy on him/her)
aba:	ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz (May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)
swt:	subhana wa ta'ala (Holy and Exalted)

The Ahmadiyya Gazette USA is published by the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc., at the local address:

Fazl-i-Umar Press
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719

Periodicals Postage Paid at Chauncey, Ohio
Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Ahmadiyya Gazette
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719-0226

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Al-Qur'an

هُوَ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ فِى الْاُمِّيّٖنَ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ
وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ق وَ اِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ
لَفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۙ وَّ اٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ ط وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝

He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered *people* a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance; and *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (62:3-4)

Commentary:

The Divine mission of the Holy Prophet[saw] consisted in the performance of the fourfold sacred duty referred to in this verse. This was the great and noble task which was entrusted to him; because it was to his apperance among the unletterd Arabs that the Patriarch Abraham[as] had prayed several thousand years ago, when in company with his son, Ishmael[as], he was raising the foundation of the *Ka'bah* (2:130). In fact, no Reformer can truly succeed in his mission unless he prepares, by his noble and purifying example, a community of sincere, devoted and righteous followers, whom he first teaches the ideals and the principles of his Message and their philosophy, significance and importance, and then sends them abroad to preach the Message to other people. The training he imparts to his followers refines their intellect, and the philosophy of his teaching engenders in them certainty of faith, and his noble example creates in them purity of heart. It is to this basic fact of religion that the verse refers. The Message of the Holy Prophet[saw] was meant not only for the Arabs among whom he was raiosed but for all non-Arabs as well, and not only for his contemporaries but also for the generations to come till the end of time.. Or the verse may signify that the Holy Prophet[saw] will be raised among another people who have not yet joined his immediate followers. The reference in the verse and in the well-known saying of the Holy Prophet[saw] is to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet[saw] himself in the person of the Promised Messiah in the Latter days.

Al-Hadith

عَنْ اَبِيْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ كُنَّا جُلُوْسًا عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اِذْ نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ سُوْرَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ فَلَمَّا قَرَاَ: وَاٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ ' قَالَ رَجُلٌ مَّنْ هٰؤُلَآءِ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ؟ فَلَمْ يُرَاجِعْهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتّٰى سَاَلَهٗ مَرَّةً اَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ اَوْ ثَلَاثًا قَالَ وَفِيْنَا سَلْمَانُ الْفَارِسِيُّ قَالَ: فَوَضَعَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَدَهٗ عَلٰى سَلْمَانَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: لَوْ كَانَ الْاِيْمَانُ عِنْدَ الثُّرَيَّا لَنَالَهٗ رِجَالٌ مِنْ هٰؤُلَآءِ۔

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that when *Surah Al-Jumu'ah* was revealed to the Holy Prophet[saw], a group of them were sitting in the company of the Holy Prophet[saw]. When the Holy Prophet[saw] recited the verse:

وَاٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ

And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. (62:4)

Someone asked: "Messenger[saw] of Allāh! Who are these people who have the status of the Companions of the Holy Prophet[saw], and yet they are not part of them. The Holy Prophet[saw] did not respond to the question. The man asked the same question three times. The narrator says that Hadhrat Salman Farsi[ra] was sitting among them. The Holy Prophet[saw] put his hand on Hadhrat Salman Farsi's[ra] shoulder and said: 'Even if Faith had ascended to the Pleiades some among them will restore it back to the earth.' "

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[AS]

Almighty Allah's Excellences of Beneficence

God Almighty possesses **many excellences** of beneficence, of which four are basic. In their natural order, the **first one** is that which is described in Surah Fatihah as *Rabbul Alameen.* This means that the *Rabubiyyat* of God Almighty, that is to say, the creation and carrying to perfection of the universe, is in operation all the time. The worlds of heavens and the earth, the worlds of bodies and souls, the worlds of animals, vegetables and minerals, and all other worlds, are being nurtured by His *Rabubiyyat.* The worlds through which a human being passes before his taking shape as a sperm till his death, or his arrival in his second life, are all nourished from the fountain of *Rabubiyyat.* Thus Divine *Rabubiyyat,* because it comprehends all souls, bodies, animals, vegetables, and minerals etc. is named the most general grace, inasmuch as everything that exists is its recipient and comes into being through it. Although Divine *Rabubiyyat* is the originator of everything that exists, and nourishes and sustains it, yet its greatest beneficiary is man because **he derives benefit from the whole of creation**. Therefore, man has been reminded that his God is *Rabbul Alameen* so that he should be encouraged to believe that the Powers of God Almighty are vast and that for man's benefit He can bring into being all types of resources.

The **second excellence** of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the next degree and which is called general grace, is *Rahmaniyyat,* by virtue of which God is named *Rahman* in Surah Fatihah. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty is called *Rahman* because He bestowed upon every living thing, which includes man, its **appropriate shape and qualities**. That is to say, man was bestowed all faculties and powers and was given a shape and limbs which were needed by the type of life which had been designed for him and to which they were suited. Whatever was needed for his maintenance was provided. Birds, animals and man were all bestowed powers that were suited to them. Thousands upon thousands of years before their coming into being, God Almighty by virtue of His attribute of *Rahmaniyyat,* created the heavenly and earthly bodies so that all living things might be safeguarded. No one's action has anything to do with the *Rahmaniyyat* of God Almighty. It is pure mercy which came into operation before the coming into being of living things. Man is the principal beneficiary of the *Rahmaniyyat* of God Almighty, inasmuch as everything is sacrificed for his success. Therefore, he is reminded that God is *Rahman.*

The **third excellence** of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the third degree, is *Rahimiyyat,* by virtue of which God has been named *Rahim* in *Surah Fatihah.* In the idiom of the Holy Qur'an, God is called *Rahim* when accepting the prayers, supplications and righteous actions of people, He safeguards them against calamities, misfortunes and waste of effort. This beneficence is described as special grace and is confined to human beings. Other things have not been bestowed the faculty of prayer and supplication and righteous action, but man has been bestowed this faculty. Man is an articulate animal and can be the recipient of Divine grace through the exercise of his faculty of speech. Other things have not been bestowed this faculty. It is obvious, therefore, that supplication is a quality of humanness, which is inherent in man's nature.

Man derives grace from the Divine attribute of *Rahimiyyat* as he derives from the attributes of *Rabubiyyat* and *Rahmaniyyat*; the only difference is that *Rabubiyyat* and *Rahmaniyyat* do not demand supplication as they are not confined to man and bestow their grace upon all living things, and indeed *Rabubiyyat* comprises within itself beneficence towards animals, vegetables, minerals and heavenly and earthly bodies. Nothing is outside the operation of its grace. As a contrast, *Rahimiyyat* is a special robe of honour for man. If man does not derive benefit from this attribute, he reduces himself to the condition of animals, nay, even of minerals.

The operation of *Rahimiyyat* having been confined to man, and supplication being needed for bringing it into operation, it shows that there is a type of Divine grace which is **conditioned upon supplication** and cannot be achieved without supplication. This is the way of Allah and is a definite law the contravention of which is not permissible. That is why all Prophets (peace be on them) supplicated for their followers. The Torah reveals that on many occasions the children of Israel offended God Almighty and were about to be chastised, but the chastisement was averted by the prayers, supplications and prostrations of Moses (peace be on him) though time after time God announced that He would destroy Israel.

All this shows that prayer is not in vain, nor is it a type of worship which does not procure any grace. This is the thinking of those who do not estimate God Almighty as He should be estimated, and who do not reflect deeply on God's words nor do they observe the law of nature. The truth is that grace does certainly descend in response to supplication and bestows salvation upon us. It is the grace of *Rahimiyyat* through which man makes progress. Through this grace, man arrives at the stage of *Vilayat*, and **believes in God Almighty as if he was beholding Him.** Intercession also depends upon the attribute of *Rahimiyyat*. It is the *Rahimiyyat* of God Almighty that demands that good people should intercede for bad people.

The **fourth beneficence** of God Almighty, which might be named most special grace, is *Malikiyyate Yaumid Deen*, by virtue of which God Almighty has been named *Maliki Yaumid Deen* in Surah Fatihah. The difference between this attribute and *Rahimiyyat* is that through prayer and worship *Rahimiyyat* operates to establish a person's worthiness and through *Malikiyyat* the reward is awarded. Through the operation of *Rahimiyyat,* a person deserves success in an affair like a student's passing an examination, but to be awarded the rank or other object for which the examination was undertaken and passed is by virtue of the attribute of *Malikiyyat.* These two attributes indicate that the beneficence of *Rahimiyyat* is achieved through God's mercy and the beneficence of *Malikiyyat* is achieved through the grace of Almighty God. *Malikiyyat* would manifest itself on a vast and perfect scale in the Hereafter, but in this world also, according to the measure of this world, all these four attributes manifest themselves. [Ayyam-us-Sulah, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 14, pp. 247-251]

The Status of the Messiah and Mahdi

Although I have explained in various books that my claim of being Jesus the Messiah, and Muhammad the Mahdi, does not mean that I am actually the same person as Prophet Jesus[as] or the Holy Prophet[saw], yet those who have not read my books with care might fall into the error that I have put forward this claim in the context of the transmigration of souls, and that I claim that the souls of these two holy Prophets[as] have actually entered my body. This is far from the truth. The fact is that past Prophets[as] had made a prophecy with regard to the latter days, according to which it would be a time when the world will be replete with two kinds of errors; one that will relate to the rights of the creatures and the other will relate to the rights of the Creator.

The wrong relating to the rights of creatures would be that the blood of man will be shed under the pretence of *Jihad*, so much so that one who kills an innocent person would be under the illusion that by this shedding of blood he has acquired great merit. Many other injuries will be inflicted upon mankind through such fanaticism merely on the basis of religious honor... The second type of wrong, which concerns the Creator, is the doctrine of modern day Christians which has reached the height of exaggeration. There is no doubt that Jesus[as] was a great Prophet, and he certainly was the beloved and chosen one of God and was the light of the world and the sun of guidance and was close to God and has a station near to His Throne. Millions of people who love him sincerely and follow his guidance will be delivered from hell; yet, it is a great mistake and is sheer infidelity to deify him.. .The truth is that when spiritual and heavenly matters fall into

the hands of the multitude they are unable to penetrate to their reality and thereby fall into grave error, partly through perversion and partly through literal interpretation of the metaphorical. Christian scholars of this age have fallen into this error and are trying by all possible means to deify Prophet Jesus[as]. This amounts to usurping the rights of the Creator and.. . it was to establish this right and to establish the Unity of God in the hearts of people, that a great Prophet arose in Arabia, whose name was Muhammad and Ahmad, countless greetings of peace be bestowed upon him by Allah. The Islamic law was divided into two parts, the greater part was:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

There is none worthy of worship except Allah.

which signifies the Unity of God. The second part was sympathy for mankind so that one should desire for others what he desires for himself. Out of these two, the Messiah[as] emphasized sympathy for man kind, for his age was in need of such emphasis. The other part, which is greater and is the fountainhead of the Majesty and Unity of God, i.e.,

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

was emphasized by Muhammad, the Chosen One[saw] because in his age emphasis was needed on that part. Now it is our time and in this age both these wrongs had reached their climax; contravening the rights of people and slaying innocent persons had become part of the Muslim belief and, in consequence of this false doctrine, thousands of innocent people had been put to the sword by the savages. On the other hand disregard of the rights of the Creator had also reached its climax and had become a part of Christian doctrine...

Thus in this age God, in view of the disregard of human rights, has named me the Messiah and sent me as the *Avatar* of Jesus the Messiah[as]; in the same way, in respect of the disregard for the rights of the Creator, God has named me Muhammad and Ahmad and, for the spreading of Divine Unity, He made me the like of Muhammad[saw] and his *Avatar.* In this sense, I am both Jesus the Messiah and Muhammad the Mahdi. Messiah is a title that was bestowed upon Jesus[as], which means he who touches God, partakes of the favor of God and is His vicegerent and adopts truth and righteousness. Mahdi is also a title which was bestowed upon Muhammad, the Chosen One . It means one who by his very nature is rightly guided, is heir to all guidance, and is an embodiment of the reflection of God's attribute *Hadi* [the Guide]. The grace and mercy of God Almighty has made me an heir to both these titles in this age and has combined these two titles in my person. In line with these meanings, I am both Jesus the Messiah and Muhammad the Mahdi. In Islamic idiom, this kind of advent is called *Buruz* (re-advent by way of reflection)." I have been bestowed two types of *Buruz,* the *Buruz* of Jesus[as] and the *Buruz* of Muhammad[saw]. By way of *Buruz,* therefore, my being is a combination of the beings of these two Prophets. In my capacity of Jesus the Messiah, it is my function to restrain the Muslims from wild attacks and bloodshed. The *Ahadith* set forth clearly, that when the Messiah comes back to the world, he would put an end to all religious wars. This is now being done...

In my capacity as Muhammad the Mahdi, it is my function to re-establish the Unity of God with heavenly signs, for our lord and master the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] had established the Majesty and Power and Might of God in the hearts of the idolaters of Arabia through heavenly signs. I have been helped by the Holy Spirit in the same manner.

[Government Angrezi aur Jihad, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 17, pp. 23-29]

Synopsis of Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V[aba], on February 4, 2011 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, Morden, UK

Shermeen Butt

Hazoor[aba] gave a discourse on *'Khaira Ummah'* (best people) and the standard set by the Holy Prophet[saw] in his Friday Sermon today. He cited the Quranic verse: **'You are the best people raised for the good of mankind; you enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in Allah. And if the People of the Book had believed, it would have surely been better for them. Some of them are believers, but most of them are disobedient.'** (3:111).

Hazoor[aba] said the subject-matter of this verse requires repeated reminding and this is why he has given discourses on it before. In it God had given a huge responsibility to those who believe, safeguard and strengthen their own belief as well as that of their next generation, and who also advise good to all and sundry around them for the sake of God. In the current time, these are believers, who have accepted the *Imam* of the age, who is the true and ardent devotee of the Holy Prophet[saw]. Just as the early Muslims kept the Qur'anic commandments and pronouncements of the Holy Prophet[saw] in view and put them in practice in order to seek God's pleasure and were successful in this, in the current age, this is the obligation of Ahmadis.

Ahmadis need to self-reflect as to how much are they fulfilling the obligation of being **'the best people'**. How much do their word and deed match, how much they, through personal practice and advice, are trying to save the world. This self-reflection is not to be based on any self-created standard, rather on the standard which the Holy Prophet[saw] set, which Hazoor[aba] would expound later in the Sermon. Nations begin to decline when they rely on self-created standards and forget their primary objective. The Qur'an informs us that earlier nations forgot their teaching and were destroyed or practiced harmful innovations to the extent of deterioration; moral and spiritual ruin. The sanctity of God or that of Prophets did not remain. Such is the state of people of the Western world in the current times. It is a Divine favor on Muslims that God has safeguarded the last Book of religious law. In spite of the majority of Muslims not abiding by their faith properly, in every age, a group of people continued to practice the teachings of the Qur'an and in the latter-days, according to His promise, God sent the Promised Messiah[as]. Today, all Ahmadis claim to accept the Messiah who brought faith back from the Pleiades and promised to once again establish Muhammad's[saw] religion to its original form. We are indeed fortunate that God took the responsibility to take the message of Islam through the Muhammadan Messiah Himself and allowed us to be part of this Divine destiny. He informed the Promised Messiah[as] 'I shall carry thy message to the ends of the earth' [Tadhkirah, p. 381].

Hazoor[aba] explained that in order to be part of the destiny associated with this revelation we need to create a revolutionary change in ourselves and become those who attain God's pleasure. If we have the traits that the aforementioned verse cites, and we engage in *Tabligh*, it would attract pious-natured people across the board. People of various religions or no religion, all will consider good morals as good. Understanding this obligation, and to attain God's pleasure, we should enjoin what is good and forbid what is bad, draw attention towards paying the dues of mankind and by displaying weariness towards usurping the rights of others, prevent people from doing so. However, the first requirement is to self-reflect. We will only have any

effect if we put our own internal system in order. In putting our internal selves in order we have to constantly have it in view that God is watching over us at all time. Prior to enjoining what is good to others, we have to bring ourselves in line with those who **'believe in Allah'**. And belief in God is true only when love of God and pleasure of God is more intense than all one's loves and pleasures, as the Qur'an states: **'...those who believe are stronger in *their* love for Allah...'** (2:166).

Hazoor[aba] said one cares the most for that which one loves. If we ponder, we will realize that being *'Khaira Ummah'* is not just a declaration of faith, rather by enhancing in love of God, one would be included in *'Khaira Ummah'*. One would be enjoining what is good and forbidding evil. In such a situation a true believer's foremost thought would be whether he or she has the quality that he or she is enjoining others or does he or she has the bad habit that he or she is forbidding others from? God is the Beloved Who is **'the Knower of the unseen and the seen'** (6:74). Thus God would say that you declare My love but your heart is tarnished and you are saying something that you do not practice. In such a situation it would the internal system of a true believer that would bring him or her to the straight path. If someone's internal system is not effective, it is cause for concern.

Hazoor[aba] said our Community has traditions which are established by the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) and his *Khulafa* in light of the teachings of Islam. Disciplinary action is taken from preventing some matters entering our Community because a true believer should only practice what is good. Without this, neither can he or she enjoin what is good nor can he or she forbid evil. Once we have associated ourselves with the Imam of the age to try and become *'Khaira Ummah'*, we have to relinquish worldliness and give up self-created standards of piety and only maintain those standards that the Promised Messiah[as] taught the Community having received guidance from God and in light of the teaching of Islam. This is a very important point that every Ahmadi should understand.

Recently, some practices contrary to the teachings of the Community took place during a wedding in a *Jama'at.* Hazoor[aba] took disciplinary action against the people. Some among them did not have much religious knowledge and were not much aware of the traditions of the Community, although this is not an excuse. Every Ahmadi should display his or her true faith and should try to achieve it. However, some among them were those who have religious knowledge, serve the Community and know the traditions and teachings of the Community. They too participated in the wedding and showed weakness and let alone prevent what was bad, they sat and observed all the absurdities. Rather than practice **'forbids evil'** they became part of it. Later on, they wrote to Hazoor[aba] that they had participated to reform others. This was strange reformation that neither was attention drawn to prevent what was bad, nor was good counselled. If any good was counselled, it was on a different subject. If good counsel was given at all, it was not to prevent that particular evil, but was about different good aspects. It is like seeing a thief stealing and rather than stop him, help him in stealing but later tell him that telling the truth is good. Indeed, telling the truth is good, but at that particular time, **'enjoin what is good and forbid evil'** entails preventing the thief from stealing.

If an Ahmadi believes in the Promised Messiah[as] then he or she should not be intimidated by society, rather should give precedence to faith. The Promised Messiah[as] prayed for his progeny and his followers to be spared the awe of *Dajjal.* If those living in the West are awed by *Dajjal,* then what is left? In the incidence many people were involved and it was submitted to Hazoor[aba] that as many people were involved it may create anxiety in the *Jama'at.* Hazoor[aba] responded to them that disciplinary action will be taken, regardless of anxiety in the *Jama'at* and if some people succumb and leave, they may leave, Hazoor[aba] did not care. Only that will come to pass that Islam teaches us and what the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) has taught us; to avoid evil and absurd practices. Conflict in word and deed is not liked by God or His Messenger[saw]. Hazoor[aba] has said it before, as have other *Khulafa*, that if such weddings and functions are taking place in Ahmadi families, Ahmadis should simply leave, otherwise, it is cowardice and is tantamount to aiding the bad practice. It is love of society overcoming love of God. May God enable every Ahmadi to understand this point.

Hazoor[aba] cited a Hadith which sets out the standard of a true believer. It states: 'There are four traits which, when found in a person, make him an absolute hypocrite, and one who possesses one of them, possesses one characteristic of hypocrisy until he abandons it. These are: When he is entrusted with something, he betrays trust; when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks promise; and when he argues, he uses abusive language.'

Explaining Hadhrat Syed Wali Ullah Shah Sahib wrote that the objective of including hypocrisy in discussing belief is the same as including *kufr,* (unbelief) *shirk* (associating partners with God) and all manner of immoderation and vulgarity. Hypocrisy also makes belief defective. It signifies disparity between what is obvious and what is hidden, the outer and inner self. The words when lying, the act when breaking promise and the intention when betraying trust or being treacherous are all contrary to fact. To break a pact and to use abusive language is also contrary to fact. As is to verbally profess belief when there is none in the heart, or if there is belief in the heart but is not verbally expressed or if no practical demonstration of belief is given. In short, all that is contrary to fact is hypocrisy. These ills can be seen quite a lot in these times and some of us also suffer from some of them. According to the Holy Prophet[saw] to have any one of these failings involves a part of one's heart in hypocrisy.

The Promised Messiah[as] said that had the hypocrites of the times of the Holy Prophet[saw] lived through this age, they would have been considered greatly devout and true believers because when evil increases even small virtue is greatly valued. Hazoor[aba] said we should be mindful that having accepted the Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) our standards should be far greater than the other Muslims.

Be a trust of national, personal or communal nature, we should honour it. At our place of employment, no matter what the rest of the staff does, our practice should distinguish us from others. Today, we proudly tell the outside world that the standard of trust of an Ahmadi is better. Just being 'better' is nothing to be proud of, rather what one can be proud of is when the standard is the best possible. The reason for no progress in the Third world is because at every step and every level trust is betrayed. Pakistan is very proud to be a Muslim country but the level of corruption there has increased further. Betrayal of trust is also very high among other Muslims and it continues to increase. Do they suppose that just by virtue of being Muslims or announcing that they will impose Islamic laws they can become *Khaira Ummah*? It is not a question of one or two ills, rather, they have all the ills, yet they are still believers and as far as true believers are concerned, they are *Kaffir* (disbeliever) in their eyes. In this deteriorated society, indeed the due of trust can be honoured by establishing good models. Today an Ahmadi should be the greatest trustee of the trust that the Holy Prophet[saw] brought, that is, the message of Unity of God and honouring dues of God and dues of mankind. For this the first step is to reform one's own self.

The second sign of a hypocrite according to the aforementioned Hadith is that he is a liar. Hazoor[aba] said it is the conflict between word and deed that is the hypocrisy. God has regarded falsehood equal to *shirk.* It is a shame that today the majority of Muslims have forgotten the difference between truth and falsehood. Today if Ahmadis do not undertake a *Jihad* against this, they would be instilling a blemish in their hearts that has no connection with the Community of the Promised Messiah[as] and Islam. If, having claimed to accept the Promised Messiah[as], who came to establish *Shariah,* falsehood remains a part of us, how could *Shariah* be established? Rather than look at others, there is a great need to self-reflect.

The third sign of a hypocrite that the Holy Prophet[saw] gave is not honouring promises/pledges. Such is the state of the world, in trade, in everyday dealings and on national level there is so much dishonouring of promises that it is beyond belief. Some business person told Hazoor[aba] that they mix ordinary rice with good quality *Basmati* rice exported to the world from Pakistan in a way that is undetectable. Hazoor[aba] said they do not care even if they are found out and the effect it could have on their business and the disgrace it would bring to the country. Not only is this breaking pledge, it is also falsehood and betrayal of trust.

The fourth sign of a hypocrite is that when he argues, he uses abusive language. Hazoor[aba] said we see this among our opponents, on every TV channel and web site that is designed against us. Ahmadis should always avoid this and should never respond to harshness in a manner that may lead to abusive language. We should keep the blessed model of the Holy Prophet[saw] in view. He was 'Mercy for all the worlds', he dispensed mercy even in response to harshness. The Promised Messiah (on whom be peace) also demonstrated that he overlooked even when people were abusive to him to his face. May God keep every Ahmadi protected from the ills which destroy belief and societal peace. Unfortunately, majority of Muslims are embroiled in such ills and are bringing Islam in disrepute and the peace of many Muslim countries is destroyed. Today the war-like situation between the masses and the ruling people in Muslim countries is a result of the hypocrisy which the Holy Prophet[saw] identified and it is giving the non-Muslims a chance to be disrespectful to Islam.

A Jewish columnist wrote in an Israeli newspaper that the teachings of Islam are not peaceful and that this is obvious from the actions of Muslims. He said peaceful teaching can be only found in Judaism or Christianity and only a very small minority of Muslims talks of peace. Hazoor[aba] said it is tragic that those whose teaching is clearly severe are pointing the finger of blame at Islam due to the actions of Muslims. Ahmadis cannot be pleased if the indication of the small peaceful minority is towards Ahmadis or any other group of Muslims that at least a small minority is not disgraced. Our happiness will be when it will be said about the majority of Muslims that they give the message of peace because of the teaching of Islam. We should pray that may God give sense to the Muslim *Ummah* to truly honour the dues of being *Khaira Ummah* and may we also honour our obligation.

Next, Hazoor[aba] gave correction of a reference from last Friday Sermon. Hazoor[aba] said he usually cross checks the references or has them checked, however this was reference of a scholar from our literature that Hazoor[aba] took, but it was incorrect. Regarding the death of Abu Lahab, a tradition relates that seven days after the battle of Badr he died of the plague and his body gave off a foul stench and was thrown in a pit and covered with stones. Another tradition relates that his death was caused by a boil and his sons did not bury him for a couple of nights, until his body started decomposing at home and gave off stench after which he was buried. The *Nikah* of a son of Abu Lahab was performed with daughter of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) Umme Kulsoom. Before going off on an expedition he went to see the Holy Prophet[saw] with the intent to create trouble and told him that he denied *Surah Al-Najm.* Then, as a mark of insult he spat and divorced the Prophet's[saw] daughter. The Prophet[saw] cursed him and it was during the expedition that he then went on to that wolves tore him apart.

Hazoor[aba] announced that he would lead the funeral Prayer in absentia of Rasheed Ahmad Butt Sahib of Lahore who passed away on 18 October 2010 at the age of 71 years. He had been injured with a gun shot wound to his leg at *Darul Zikr* on 28 May 2010. He had lost a lot of blood and had become weak. Through out his life he served the Community in many roles and was a devoted Ahmadi with a very sincere connection with *Khilafat.* He used to associate all his successes to the prayers of the *Khalifa* of the time. May God elevate his status and grant steadfastness to his family.

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HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "He who is not grateful to mankind is not grateful to Allah."

(Tirmidhi bab ma ja' fishshukr liman ahsana ilaika)

PAIGHAM-E-SULAH (A MESSAGE OF PEACE) – BY The PROMISED MESSIAH[as]: REMEDY FOR PEACE IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

Mansura Bashir Minhas, Miami, FL

A cursory glance at the current global situation is enough to comprehend what ails the modern day world. Warfare is rampant and it manifests itself in many forms, under the guise of religious strife, sectarian clashes or struggles that are motivated by nationalistic ideals. In a hostile environment rife with conflicts, clashes and combats, peace becomes an elusive reality.

However, such conflicts and battles are not new. Human beings have always struggled for dominance, driven by quests for religious, political, sectarian or cultural supremacy. From time immemorial, many wars have been fought over global resources; in the present era, oil and water are some the cherished and sought-for commodities, whose paucity and scarcity continues to threaten and escalate global warfare and strife. Religious warfare is instigated by animosity and increasing misunderstandings among the various faiths. Islam is undeniably the most misunderstood and misconstrued religion in the modern era. A faith followed by 1.6 billion people worldwide is judged and evaluated through the actions of its violent and radical fringes. Such hasty judgment stems from an unwillingness to understand and wrong presumptions about Islam. Regrettably this lends credibility to the fanatics. The inherent risk of such a brash judgment is that it gives undue importance to elements which misconstrue Islamic teachings for their own agendas. This is evident all over the world today. *Al-Qaeda* – probably the largest terrorist organization in the world aspires to wage a global *Jihad* for Islam's supremacy. It finds easy recruits for its stateless army across the globe. It lends allegiance to forces which are waging their own wars.

This was apparent in a recent terrorist attack in Russia. An airport in Moscow was attacked by Chechen rebels. The media quickly drew parallels about this attack with other terrorist activities by radical groups such as *Al-Qaeda*. However, what was not mentioned enough was the fact that the Chechens have been fighting for their independence for many decades. Even though they find support amongst radical groups, their struggle is inherently different in nature and not for the global supremacy of Islam. There can be no justification for killing innocent civilians whatsoever, but at the same time it is essential to acknowledge the fact that decades of oppression at the hands of the Soviet/Russian Army are at the core of the Chechens' struggle for independence.

Last week in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak's autocratic rule ended after his stronghold on power for 30 years. Economic woes and the corruption/tyranny of the Mubarak regime are perceived to be at the core of this uprising. However, the reasons for this sudden revolt lie elsewhere also. Global dynamics are shifting and it is imminent that the current supplies of oil and other natural resources are headed for depletion. Africa has vast amounts of untapped resources. In this context, the recent upheavals in the North African countries are more than the domino effect. The global struggle for control of natural resources between the strongest economies of the world- United States and China could presumably be a factor here as well. Muslim Brotherhood may try to exert its influence in Egypt and capitalize on the turmoil. Muslim Brotherhood is the world's largest and oldest Islamic political group. Despite being currently banned in Egypt, its rising influence in the aftermath of the revolution is

a source of concern and rightfully so. It is a transnational ideological movement which precedes *Al-Qaeda* and it seeks the political dominance of Islam and aspires for an Islamic State. What is transpiring in Pakistan is a culmination of such aspirations that remained unchecked for too long and now the country finds itself at a perilous juncture, with serious concerns about its viability to function as a State. When radical elements perpetuate their misconstrued ideals and use brutal force and violence to justify their barbaric and intolerant stance, there is no end in sight to their aspirations which can never be satiated. Verses from the Holy Qur'an are quoted out of context, blasphemy laws are shamelessly employed to settle personal vendettas and most tragically, in Pakistan's case, the State has become an ally in perpetuation of hate. Geographic boundaries become irrelevant as the pandemic of bigotry and intolerance spreads. Last week, in Indonesia three Ahmadi Muslims were martyred in a most horrific manner which puts humanity to shame. Indonesia once took pride in its multiculturalism and diversity. However, it has failed miserably to contain the radicals which are gaining strength and threatening its pluralism.

The purpose of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] was to revive Islam to its original form and end religious warfare. He denounced bloodshed, and sought to rid Islam of fanaticism that had encroached upon its true message. The current global events underscore the need for such teachings. Muslims in the time of the Promised Messiah[as] were also not immune to conflicts. Interestingly the contentious Blasphemy law in Pakistan stems from the United India's Penal Code of 1860. Section 295 A "Injuring or defiling a place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class" was added in 1927 in order to prevent hate speech in a state where numerous religions cohabited. However, Pakistan's Ziaul Haq added the harshest amendment through Section 295-C whose worst repercussions are evident now.

Paigham-e-Sulah (A Message of Peace) is the last and final book of the Promised Messiah[as] that he finished writing on May 25, 1908 a day before his demise on May 26, 1908. It is an essay on the pluralistic and tolerant values of Islam. It is not mere coincidence that this was to be the final message of the Promised Messiah[as]. It was the need of the time and would serve as a beacon of light for ages to come. This book holds a key to fulfilling the true purpose of the Promised Messiah's[as] advent – that he had indeed come within the fold of Islam to revive it to its original form. This message of peace would lay down the foundation of Islamic principles regarding peaceful coexistence with other faiths and thereby reinforce its inherent universal message.

This book has to be read in the context of the state of religious warfare and strife among various faiths at the times of the Promised Messiah[as] and its relevance in modern times is undisputable. The Indian Subcontinent had been the hotbed of ancient civilizations for centuries and has nurtured numerous faiths and traditions that have flourished over centuries. In a multicultural environment, the need for a unifying message was essential. The foremost objective of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] - to unite mankind and disseminate the true essence of Islam – its message of peace, is the hallmark of this outstanding essay. In this invaluable treatise, the Promised Messiah[as] reiterates the commonality of all faiths and their messengers. He expounds the common values of all major religions and how these were a mere demonstration of God's love for all mankind and how not a single tribe, region has been left out in the Divine scheme of Guidance. Allah Almighty has not forsaken any part/region of the world and deprived it of spiritual nourishment. However, these religions were for a specific time and age and addressed the needs of a particular group and thus they all lacked the universal appeal. He dispels the commonly held view of the Jews and Christians that all Prophets and Messengers belonged only to the House of Israel. Aryan Hindus entertained a similar belief. The Promised Messiah[as] explains how this thought process confounds logic. He explains how God does not exclude any of his people from his physical laws, thus it was inconceivable that it could be any different for spiritual laws. In this context, the scope of the Promised Messiah's[as] message can be understood, as his message echoes that of the *"Rehmatullil Alameen"* (The Universal Prophet), whereas Jesus[as] was the Messiah specifically for the astray 12 lost tribes of Israel)."... and there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent". (*Al-Fatir* 35:25)

The Promised Messiah[as] elaborates on the message of the Holy Founders of the faiths that were sent to the region; Sri Krishna, Gautama Buddha, Baba Guru Nanak and Zoroaster were all indeed blessed with Divine guidance. The Promised Messiah[as] reiterates that every religion's beliefs embody values to improve the state of man, and that in God's scheme all religions share a commonality of purpose - to progress human morals. However, since religions preceding Islam were for a specific time, era or tribe, their messages lacked the universality and thus could not pertain to any other setting besides their place of origin. Prophet Zoroaster's message and appeal was confined to the people of his land. Sri Krishna was indeed a prophet for the people of the Indian subcontinent; however that message was for a specific people and time. Gautama Buddha rejected certain aspects of Hindu dogma that in his opinion caused inequalities and injustices. He was thus labeled an agnostic and atheist. He was compelled to emigrate and thus we find his followers as far as South East Asia and China. When God is apparently monopolized to the extent that it excludes different viewpoints (that assumed prerogative that God's revelation is somewhat the sole privilege of a few), it exudes arrogance and creates an environment where differences are stifled. Ironically this analysis of the Promised Messiah[as] correlates perfectly to the condition of the radical Muslims' philosophy in present times.

The Promised Messiah[as] also delves into the causes of strife between the Muslims and Hindus of the time and attributes it to religious differences and not political. This was the foremost reason that Muslims were reluctant to join Congress and led them to form their own organization – Muslim League, in 1906. He explains to the Muslims that in order to earn respect, it is imperative that Muslims respect the differences of opinion with other religions. He urged upon the Muslims to respect the scriptures and Holy personages of Hinduism as they are indeed from God. Giving them respect is the only way to expect them to reciprocate the reverence that Muslims expect from their Hindu brethren. The Promised Messiah[as] elaborates upon this principle and encourages Muslims to forgo eating cow meat. Even though it was perfectly permissible, he made them realize that it was not obligatory. Hence, in the course of doing so, even though an undisputed right was forgone; it would enhance mutual respect between Muslims and Hindus and ultimately foster an environment of harmony and peace. This spirit bears a striking resemblance to Holy Prophet Muhammad's[saw] reconciliatory stance at the time of the Treaty of *Hudaibiyya.* He tried his utmost to achieve peace with the Meccans and gave in to their unjustified demands when the draft of the treaty was being formulated. The Promised Messiah[as] reiterates how the Holy Qur'an is committed to peace and that it acknowledges all the Messengers of God and this is its unique distinction:

"We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit". (Al-e-Imran 3: 85)

In times preceding the advent of Islam, the moral state of the whole world was in a dismal state and there was a dire need for an exceptional and outstanding Prophet. Thus, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] reformed the Arab peninsula and its inhabitants became civilized and were spiritually awakened. This message later spread to the rest of the world. The Promised Messiah[as] explains how Islam always flourished in times of peace and dispels the myth that Islam was spread by violent *Jihad.* Muslims were persecuted, harassed and intimidated in an extremely hostile environment. The Holy Prophet[saw] commanded his people to defend themselves only when all other means of achieving peace had been exhausted.

The Promised Messiah[as] explains that only when the Muslims were enamored with the Love of God, were they able to reach the corners of the earth- China, Europe, Indian subcontinent and Africa. It is undisputed that Islam spread many folds in times of peace. The Promised Messiah[as] concludes the book with a comparison of the Holy Scriptures; the balanced and universal message of the Holy Qur'an supersedes the restrictive and time bound teachings of the Torah and Bible. They were for a specific time and ear and thus lacked a universal appeal. 'A Message of Peace' is the remedy for the ills that afflict the world today. In embracing the ideals postulated therein, is a guarantee for peace for the entire mankind. Adhering to its message can help build bridges, shatter myths and pave way for mutual cooperation and peaceful coexistence among the various faiths.

CONDITIONS OF BAI'AT: CONDITION V

Hadhrat Miraza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V[aba]

That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and in happiness, in adversity and in prosperity, in felicity and in trial; and that he/she shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of God and keep himself/herself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from Him at the onslaught of any *misfortune; on the contrary, he/she shall march forward.*

Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّشْرِيْ نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

And of men there is he who would sell himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Compassionate to *His* servants. (2:208)

In explaining this verse of the Holy Qur'an, the Promised Messiah[as] says:

> The people of the highest grade among the people—that is, people who are completely lost in the pleasure of Allah, and sell their selves to earn the pleasure of God—are the people upon whom the mercy of Allah descends.... In this verse Allah the Almighty says, 'Only he is delivered from all tribulations who sells his self in My way and for My pleasure. He proves with his utmost endeavors that he belongs to God and considers his entire being as something that has been fashioned for obedience of the Creator and service to the creation...'
>
> *(Islamic Usul Ki Philosophy, Roohani Khaza'in,* vol. 10, p. 385)

Then he says:

> A loved one of God sells his being in the way of God. In return, he earns the pleasure of God. Such are the ones upon whom the special mercy of God descends. *(Islami Usul ki Philosophy, Roohani Khaza-'in,* vol. 10, p. 473)

Then he says:

> There are some people who sell their beings hoping that He would be pleased...
>
> *(Paighami Sulah, Roohani Khaza'in,* vol. 23, p. 473)

For such people, Allah the Almighty has given the glad tiding:

يٰٓاَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝ ارْجِعِيْٓ اِلٰى رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ۝ فَادْخُلِيْ فِيْ عِبٰدِيْ ۝ وَادْخُلِيْ جَنَّتِيْ ۝

And thou, O soul at peace! Return to thy Lord well pleased *with Him and* He well pleased *with thee.* So enter thou among My servants. And enter thou My Garden. (89:28—31)

People who are reconciled to the will of Allah, and suffer all hardships and tribulations for His sake, are never left unrewarded by Allah the Almighty. There are many among us who are embodiments of shortcomings and defects. We commit many errors and sins. But if we are in the habit of reconciling to the will of Allah, and are ever-prepared to, and do, suffer all indignities for Him, if we are not like the wailing woman who put up a big clamor on any small suffering, for such patient ones there is a glad tiding from the Holy Prophet[saw].

Sufferings of a Muslim are an Expiation for Sins

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] narrates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, 'No Muslim suffers any calamity, suffering, pain, discomfort, or anxiety, even as small as the prick of a thorn, but Allah wipes out instead some of his defaults and his sins.' *(Sahih Muslim, KitabuI-Birri was-Silah, Babu Thawabil-Mo'mini fi ma yusibuhu nin Marazin au Huznin au nabwa dhalik)*

In another *Hadith* Hadhrat Suhaib Bin Sinan[ra] has related that the Holy Prophet[saw] said, "Wondrous is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything, and it is so for him alone. If he experiences something agreeable, he is grateful to God and that is good for him; and if he experiences adversity, he is steadfast and that is good for him because he earns merit for his steadfastness.'"

(Sahih Muslim, Kitabuz-Zuhdi, Babul Mo'mini Amruhu kulluhu Khair)

Sometimes Allah makes His servants go through sufferings related to his children. There is excessive wailing and crying at the death of children, especially among the women. Thanks to Allah, He has granted to the Ahmadiyyah Muslim *Jama'at* mothers who are very patient and reconciled to His will. But sometimes there are instances of complaining, especially among the illiterates or those with meager education. In fact, I have also observed some cases among those with good education that they utter words of ingratitude.

There is a *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet[saw] used to take a pledge from women Companions[ra] in this respect. The *Hadith* runs as follows:

> Hadrat Usaid[tm] relates that he heard from a woman Companion[ra] who had taken a pledge at the hand of the Holy Prophet[saw] that the pledge included the following: 'We will not disobey the Holy Prophet[saw], will not tear our faces in wailing, will not raise a hue and cry during mourning, and will not tear our clothes or keep our hair ruffled.'
>
> (Sunano Abi Dawud, Kitabul Jana'iz, Babun fin-Nauh)

Real Time to Show Patience is When Tragedy Strikes

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] passed by a woman who was crying by the side of a grave. He said to her, 'Be mindful of thy duty to Allah and be steadfast.' She retorted, 'Leave me alone; you have not been afflicted as I have been? She had not known who he was. Someone told her, 'That was the Holy Prophet[saw].' She proceeded to the door of the Holy Prophet[saw] and not finding any doorman went in and said to him, 'I had not recognized you? He said, 'Steadfastness means to be resigned at the time of the first shock of grief?

(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitabul Jana'iz, Babu Ziyaratil-Qubur)

Another important point that has been emphasized in the fifth condition is [to remain steadfast] no matter how hard the circumstances, how long the period of hardship, how apparent the worldly attractions, how likely the benefits from diverse worldly activities, and how luring the attractions offered by the worldly powers that tells you not to worry because: 'as an Ahmadi, even as you maintain ties to the *Jama'at,* you can still conduct your professional affairs, serve the *Jama'at,* and sacrifice financially? All of these are caused by *Dajjal* [Antichrist] to move you away from Allah and the *Jama'at.* Therefore, the Promised Messiah[as] says that if you have taken the pledge, stay away from these snares. Do not be misled by these attractions. Remain faithful to Allah. If you turn to Him, you belong to the Promised Messiah[as] and will receive everything. The following is a beautiful admonition of the Holy Prophet[saw] in this respect.

> Hadhrat Ibne 'Abbas[ra] has related that: I was once riding with the Holy Prophet[saw]. He said, 'My dear child, I am going to teach you a few things: Keep Allah in mind, He will safeguard you; keep Allah in mind, you will find Him nearby. When in need, ask only of Allah; if you need help, ask Him alone for help. Remember, if the whole world joins together to benefit you, it can do nothing to benefit you, except if Allah wishes and decrees it for you. And if they all join to hurt you, they can do nothing to hurt you, except if Allah decrees the harm for you. The pens have been stored away and the ink has dried."
>
> *(Sunan-ut-Tinnadhi, Kitabu Sifatil Qiyamah, Bab No. 59)*

Another version is:

Keep Allah in mind, you will find Him before you. Recognize Allah in times of ease, He will recognize you in times of hardship. Remember, what escaped

you was not decreed for you; and what is decreed for you will definitely come to you. Remember, the help of Allah comes as a result of steadfastness, and times of ease and times of hardship are commingled, and every hardship is followed by times of ease.

(Riazus Salihin Lii Imam An-Nawawi, Babul-Muraqabah, Hadith No. 62)

Nothing that the Holy Prophet[saw] did was against the pleasure of Allah; yet, he prayed fervently, he prayed for the pleasure of Allah.

Hadhrhat Muhammad Bin Ibrahim[ra] narrates a *Hadith* from Hadhrat 'Aishah[ra], 'Once I was sleeping by the side of the Holy Prophet[saw]. During a time at night I did not find him there. While searching around, my hand touched his feet while he was prostrating. He was praying, "Allah, I seek the protection of Thy pleasure against Thy displeasure; and I seek the protection of Thy forgiveness against Thy punishment. I cannot count the ways of praising Thee. You are as You have described Your Holy Self."

(Sunan-ut-Tirmadhi, Kitab-ud-Da'wat, Babu Ma Ja'a fi 'Aqdit-Tasbih Bil-yad)

Another tradition says that:

Someone from Medina heard from Hadhrat 'Abdul Wahhab Bin al-Ward[ra] that Hadhrat Mu'awiyah[ra] wrote to Hadhrat 'Aishah[ra] requesting some advice. She replied, *'Assalamo 'Alaikum.* I have heard the Holy Prophet[saw] say, "One who seeks the pleasure of Allah, even at the cost of displeasing some people, Allah is Sufficient for him against them. But he who displeases Allah for the sake of pleasing some people, Allah hands him over to those people."

(Sunan-ut-Tirmadhi, Kitabuz -Zuhd, Babu Ma Ja'a ft Hifzil Lisan, Hadith No. 2414)

You Are the Last Jama'at Established by Allah

The Promised Messiah[as] writes:

"It is inevitable that you should be tried with diverse types of pain and misfortune as the faithful before you were tried. Be mindful, lest you should stumble. So long as you have a firm relationship with heaven, the earth can do you no harm. Whenever harm befalls you, it will be through yourself and not through your enemy. Even if you lose all honor on earth, Allah will bestow eternal honor upon you from heaven. So do not let go of Him. It is inevitable that you be persecuted and suffer many disappointments, but do not lose heart, for it is Allah Who tests you whether you are steadfast in His cause or not. If you desire that angels should praise you in heaven, then endure beating and be joyful, hear abuse and be grateful, experience failure and do not cut your relationship with Allah. You are the last *Jama'at* of Allah, so practice virtue at its highest level. Anyone from among you who becomes slothful will be cast out of the *Jama'at* like a foul thing and will die in sorrow and will be able to do no harm to Allah. I give you the good news that your God truly exists. All are His creatures, but He chooses the one who chooses Him. He comes to the one who goes to Him. He bestows honor upon him who honors Him.

(Kashti-e-Nuh, Roohani Khaza-'in, vol. 19, p. 15)

Then the Promised Messiah[as] says:

"What we need to do is to please Allah. That requires sincerity; truthfulness, and fidelity; not that the efforts of our *Jama'at* be limited to mere verbiage. When Allah is pleased with us, He puts blessings in our affairs and opens the doors of His grace and blessings.... This narrow gate - the gate of truthfulness and fidelity - is not easy to cross. We can never be boastful that we start receiving dreams or revelations and thus we sit idly and refrain from utmost striving. Allah the Almighty does not like that.... "

(Al-Badr, vol., 3, No. 18—19, May 8—16, 1904, p. 10)

Then he says:

"Every true believer passes through such circumstances. If he becomes His with sincerity and fidelity; Allah becomes his

friend. But if the structure of faith is weak, there are dangers. We have no knowledge of the secrets of anybody's heart... but anyone who totally belong to God receives His protection. Although He is the God of everyone, He manifests especially to those who hand themselves over to God. To hand oneself over to God means that the self be totally demolished and nothing should remain of it. That is why I tell my *Jama'at* again and again that they should take no pride in taking the pledge. If the heart is not purified, there is no merit in placing their hands in my hand.... But anyone who makes a true pledge attains forgiveness of even major sins and receives a new life."

(Malfoozat, new edition, vol. 3, p. 65)

Those Who Belong to the Promised Messiah[as] Cannot be Separated From Him

Then the Promised Messiah[as] says:

"He who does not wish to follow me can depart from me. I do not know how many terrible and thorny forests I may have to cross. Why do those who are tender-footed put themselves to trouble with me? Those who are mine will not depart from me, neither on account of misfortune, nor in consequence of the vilification of people, nor through heavenly trials and tribulations. Those who are not mine, vain are their affirmations of friendship, for they will soon be separated from me and their last state will be worse than their first. Shall we be afraid of earthquakes; shall we become frightened by trials in the cause of Allah? Can we be separated by any trial that comes from our Beloved Allah? Certainly not, but only through His grace and mercy. Those who wish to depart may do so; we bid them farewell. But they should remember that after thinking ill and cutting asunder, if they should again incline towards me, such inclination would not receive the honor from God as is bestowed upon the faithful, for the stain of ill-thinking and treachery is a big stain."

(Anwarul Islam, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 9, pp. 23—24)

Steadfastness

One hundred years ago, two elders of the *Jama'at* demonstrated perfect fidelity and steadfastness. They were true to their pledge, very true. They were enticed with different kinds of attractions to break the pledge, but these princes of steadfastness paid no attention to them and remained true to their pledge. The Promised Messiah[as] has paid excellent tribute to them. They are Sabibzadah Sayyed 'Abdul Latif Shahid[ra] and 'Abdur Rahman Khan[ra]. I present an excerpt from the Promised Messiah[as]:

"Ponder with faith and fairness that if a *Jama'at* were based entirely on deceit, falsehood, and trickery could its members demonstrate such steadfastness and valour that they should not forsake this path, accept being trampled under stones and— not worrying about their wives and children—offer their lives despite the repeated promises of release on condition of renouncing *Bai'at?* Sheikh 'Abdur Rahman[ra] was slaughtered in Kabul in the same manner. He made no protest nor begged for release by renouncing *Bai'at.*

This alone is the sign of a true faith and a true *Imam.* When someone attains a true understanding and the heart is permeated with spiritual sweetness, such a person does not fear being killed in this path. Of course, those whose faith is skin-deep, and faith has not permeated their limbs and veins, can turn apostate like Judas Iscariot. There are examples of such apostates in the life of every Prophet. Thanks to Allah that a large party of the faithful is with me; every one of them is a sign for me. This is the Grace of my Lord.

رَبِّ اِنَّكَ جَنَّتِیْ وَرَحْمَتُكَ جَنَّتِیْ وَاٰیَاتُكَ غِذَائِیْ وَفَضْلُكَ رِدَائِیْ

O my Lord, You are my Paradise, and Your Mercy is my protection, and Your signs are my nourishment and Your Grace is my mantle.

(Haqiqatul Wahi, Roohani Khaza'in, vol. 22, pp. 360—361)

The history of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* over the last one hundred years bears Witness that

such examples of faithfulness and fidelity have been repeatedly demonstrated. There were losses of lives and property There were martyrdoms. Children were killed in the presence of fathers, and fathers were killed in the presence of children. Then did Allah—Who is the Greatest in rewarding faithfulness— permit this blood to be spilled in vain? No. He showered His Mercy upon their progenies in an unprecedented way. Many of you who are present here or are spread in many countries are personal witnesses to this. Indeed, many of you are the recipients of these blessings. This is a consequence of the fidelity that you have shown towards Allah and the way you remained true to the pledge of allegiance. When the time of ease comes, do not forget this pledge of *Bai'at* nor let your future generations forget it. Always remain faithful to the dear Allah, so that His blessings may continue to pour on your future generations; transfer this relationship of fidelity to the coming generations.

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HELP

HUMANITY FIRST

WITH

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Segne Seine Seele (Bless His Soul)

Furqan Mehmud

Famous German, high in stature.
Poetic heart and soul, humble in nature.

Never encountered him face to face.
Just sent letters with replies of grace.

A great poet and writer.
Ahmadiyyat's faithful fighter.

His poems were inspirational.
The steps he took were sensational.

Obedient to the Imam of the age.
Translator on Khilafat's stage.

Wished well and was eager to meet.
His love and affection developed a new feat.

I'll miss his letters and his brotherhood.
He left me with nothing but good.

Hadayatulah Hubsch, a life of brilliance.
God grant his loved ones with patience.

****

HADITH

Hadhrat 'Uthman bin 'Affan[ra] ordered a pot of water. First he poured the water into palms of his hands thrice and washed his hands. Then he put his right hand into the pot of water, rinsed his mouth, and cleansed his nostrils by putting water in them and blowing it out. Then he washed his face thrice, his arms up to elbows thrice and passed his moist hands over his head. Then he washed both feet up to his ankles thrice. Then he said the Holy Prophet[saw] has said that the one who performs ablution like I have done, then offers two *rak'at* of Prayer without any apprehensions, all of his previous sins will be forgiven."

(Bukhari kitabul wudu-' babal wudu 'thala-than thalathan)

THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as] WITH FRIENDS AND STRANGERS

Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra]

Translated by: Arifa Haleem

God Almighty blessed the Promised Messiah[as] with such a heart that was full of the sentiments of love and loyalty. He was one of those people who once erected any building of love then was never the first one to demolish it. A person, Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi was his childhood friend and companion but when Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] claimed himself as the Promised Messiah, he stumbled and not only broke the friendship ties but also became his bitter opponent. He was the first who issued the *Fatwah* of "*kufar*"i.e., infidelity against him but the memory of his friendship remained alive in the heart of the Promised Messiah[as] up to the last days of his life. Though the Promised Messiah[as] broke his relationship with him for the sake of God Almighty and wrote forceful articles in response to his objection to a counterbalance his mischievous activities yet he never forgot the friendship times. He always remembered the broken ties of friendship with bitterness. So in the last period of his life he addressed Maulvi Muhammad Hussain in these words:

"You cut the tree of love that we both planted together in our childhood but in the matter of love my heart is not going to be negligent.

(Braheen -e-Ahmaddiyya Part 5 1905)

When any friend of the Promised Messiah[as] met him after some period of separation then by looking at him, his face used to become so fresh as if an unblown bud suddenly bloomed into a flower. After the departure of the friends his heart was used to be deeply grieved. Once when he wrote "*Ameen*" after finishing the Holy Qur'an by his elder son, and our big brother Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din[ra] he invited some foreign friends as well in the ceremony to share his happiness. At that time he mentioned in ''*Ameen*''about the arrival of his friends also and by thinking about their departure, he expressed his grief too. So he said,

مہماں جو کرکے الفت آئے بصد محبت
دل کو ہوئ ھے فرحت اور جاں کو میری راحت
پر دل کو پہنچے غم جب یاد آئے وقت رخصت
یہ روز کر مبارک سبحان من یرانی
دنیا بھی اک سرا ھے بچھڑے گا جو ملا ھے
گر سو برس رہا ھےآخر کو پھر جدا ھے
شکوہ کی کچھ نہیں جایہ گھر ہی بے بقا ھے
یہ روز کر مبارک سبحان من یرانی

Durre Sameen (Urdu)

Translation:

When the guests come and visit me out of great love in their hearts, my heart and soul is refreshed and immensely delighted but when I think about their departure it makes me sad and I am deeply grieved.
May this day bring good luck and Glorified is He who has shown me this fortunate day
This world is a temporary abode. Who ever meets here, has to leave and separate. If one
lives here for a hundred years even then one has to leave and separate. This residing place is not ever lasting.
May this day be blessed and Glorified is He who has shown me this day .

In the beginning he used to take meals together with his friends and guests in the male section of the house and there used to be such frankness in this gathering that every type of subject was being discussed informally. So along with apparent meal educational and spiritual meal was also being served. On such occasions he personally used to take care of every guest and was watchful that every thing should be available to every person. Usually he himself used to ask about every guest if he was habitual of anything special e.g. milk, tea or pan, (betel leaves) Keeping in view every one's habit he provided every thing to every one as far as possible. When some special friend wanted to go back from Qadian then usually he walked with him up to one and half or two miles to give him company and then returned after bidding him farewell with great love and respect.

He also wished that the friends coming to Qadian should try their best to stay with him in a part of his house. He used to say that life is not trustworthy. By availing of the opportunity of living together for a period of time should be considered as a blessing. So every part of his house became a permanent guesthouse and every room was occupied with guests. In spite of the shortage of space he was extremely pleased by living together like this with his friends. I remember it very well that now a days the dignitaries who feel discomfort by living in spacious houses and villas also, were happy in the times of the Promised Messiah[as] by living in single rooms.

In Qadian there is a fruit garden from the times of the Promised Messiah's[as] father in which there are different kinds of fruit trees. It was the system of the Promised Messiah[as] that when it was fruit season he accompanied by his friends and guests used to go to this garden. The seasonal fruit was being plucked and was eaten freely together with his friends. At that time it seemed as if innocent offspring is sitting around and encircling an affectionate father. In these gatherings nothing superfluous was being talked about but there was always very pious and mostly it was religious conversation. In this informal and loving atmosphere the gushing spring of intellectual knowledge and revelation continuously flowed.

In regard to the friendship relations of the Promised Messiah[as] another point worth mentioning is that his friendship was based on the principle of "friendship and enmity both should be for the sake of God Almighty. They should not be for one's own self or for the world". That was why for him there was no difference between the rich and the poor. From the vast sea of his love all shared equally.

Behavior with Strangers

The Holy Qur'an in *Surah Al-Maidah* verse 9 says that enmity of any nation or sect should not incite you to act otherwise than justice. At any cost you should be just to every party and every individual. This golden teaching was the prominent principle of the Promised Messiah's[as] life. He always used to say that we do not have personal enmity with any individual but we have enmity only with false and filthy thoughts. On account of this principle so far as the personal matters were concerned his behavior with his friends was very affectionate. Even the distress of his worst enemy used to disturb him. So when his paternal cousins who

were his bloodthirsty enemies built a wall in front of his house and made him and his guests suffer greatly then at last by the grace of God he won the trial and those people had to demolish the wall by their own hands. After this without the permission of the Promised Messiah his lawyer filed the lawsuit for the compensation of the expenditure. This made these people very nervous and they sent a letter of humility to the Promised Messiah[as] and requested him to have mercy on them. He not only made the law suit stop with immediate effect but also apologized to his bloodthirsty enemies and told them that this action was taken in his ignorance and he was sorry for it. He scolded his lawyer by asking why the lawsuit for the compensation of expenditure was filed with out his knowledge. At this time if there were somebody else here he could have found relief by taking the enemy to the extreme end of insolence and destruction but even in such circumstances he showed benevolence and proved gloriously that he has enmity only with filthy thoughts and actions. So far as someone's personal matters were concerned, even his enemies were also his friends. In the same way when in a dangerous murder case the charges of murder were leveled against the Promised Messiah[as] his bitter opponent Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi presented himself as a witness to testify against him. In order to weaken Maulvi Muhammad Hussein's testimony his lawyer tried to start cross-questioning about his personal and family matters. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] angrily forbade his own council and said, "Whatever happens I don't allow you to ask such type of questions". In this way by putting himself in danger, he saved the personal honor of his life-threatening enemy.

Similarly when according to the prophecy of the Promised Messiah[as] Pundit Lekh Ram was murdered in Lahore and he got the information, he thanked God for the fulfillment of the prophecy but on account of human sympathy he expressed his grief too on his death and said repeatedly "We are sorry that Pundit Sahib did not listen to us and by adopting the attitude of blasphemy to God Almighty and His prophet and by accepting the challenge of *Mubahila* (prayer duel) he had sown the seeds of self destruction."

Some *Arya Samaji* of Qadian were deadly against the Promised Messiah[as] and used to take part in disgusting propaganda against him but when ever they were in trouble or suffered due to any disease, they forgot their activities and came running to him. He always treated them sympathetically and graciously and by helping them he was highly pleased. There was a person, Lala Buddha Mal, who lived in Qadian and was a deadly enemy of the Promised Messiah[as]. When *Minaratul Masih* was going to be built in Qadian, those people lodged a complaint to the authorities that it will affect the privacy of their houses, so the ban should be imposed on its construction. On this, a local officer came there and in his company Lala Buddha Mal and some other local Hindus and non-Ahmadis came to the Promised Messiah[as]. The Promised Messiah[as] made the officer understand that the complaint was lodged only due to their enmity otherwise there is no question of non-privacy. Suppose if there is no privacy there, then we will also be affected in the same way as they are and also told him that we are going to build this Minaret only as an obligation, otherwise we do not have any wish to spend money on such things. During this conversation he said to the officer, ask Buddha Mal, whenever he got the chance to harm me did he not avail of it and also ask him did it ever happen that I got the opportunity to benefit him and I hesitated to do it. During this conversation of the Promised Messiah[as] Lala Buddha Mal remained sitting with his head cast down.

In a nut shell the existence of the Promised Messiah[as] was a perfect blessing. He was a blessing for "*Din*" and a blessing for the message he brought himself. He was a blessing for the village where he was born. He was a blessing for the world where he was sent. He was a blessing for his friends and foes. He scattered the seed of blessing on all sides, up, down, front, and also in the back, on the right and on the left but he is unlucky on whom this seed fell down but like a barren soil he refused to accept it and grow it.

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THE EXISTENCE OF GOD:
SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A HUMBLE SCIENTIST

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In pragmatic and concrete terms we may have some pesky problem in proving the existence of God to someone who is devoid of foundational truths of faith. However, God is there within us and even closer to us than our jugular vein or carotid artery. Exploration of our outer world and space requires some real effort. Exploration of our inner world and space too warrants intense motivation and effort. The beauty of finding the labyrinthine inner space has its own dividends coupled with ecstatic happiness, peace and tranquility.

In every struggle we have a possibility to stumble and fumble. The same can happen when we embark on exploring our inner world. It is not that God has made His appearance difficult but because He wants to ascertain our genuine sincerity, honesty and persistence to the noble purpose. The peaks and valleys of our inner world and the diligent and noble search thereof lead us to a stratosphere which is the domain of a very few. When we reach there, something within us tells us that we have been touched by an extraordinarily unique power and our lives have been transformed forever.

The human mind, despite its unlimited capacity to think and ponder, and in fact, has conquered some of the unusual realms of time and space, is probably not big and large enough to encapsulate the existence of God in all its glorious ramifications and permutations . Soon limitations of even the most prodigious and prolific mind are exposed as one tries to analyze and encapsulate His existence. The flight of even the most brilliant mind has a limit.

We can feed and perceive the presence of a vibrant God but we are not destined to fathom it in all its wondrous ramifications. In the bigger scheme of things we are permitted to have something but not everything. The fire of love of God has a unique luster and allure. Those who are smitten by it cannot find the same ecstasy elsewhere. Their contentment and satisfaction have no parallel. In a worldly sense they may appear poor but they have the capacity to give everything they have and in fact, they enrich the lives of millions of people who happen to come under the sphere of their influence. They are like burning and shining candles which burn other candles as soon as they come in contact with them. Their shining examples mold the lives of millions.

If we look around carefully we find our universe and billions of stars and planets with superb diversity and stupendous harmony. The dazzling variety of inhabitants of our universe is absolutely stunning, captivating and mesmerizing. Humankind stands at the very pinnacle of all these creations. How effectively forces of gravitation and magnetism work with weak forces to preserve harmony at each level is totally stunning. At the pinnacle of all the universe stands the existence of humankind as a testimony to supreme sculpture and masterly artistry, rhythm and symmetry.

One may be reminded of the beautiful passage from the Holy Qur'an:

فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ۝

Which, then, of the favors of your Lord will you twain deny? (55:14)

This is repeated in *Surah Al-Rahman* thirty-one times to show the emphasis.

Equally mysterious and astounding is the creation of the animal kingdom where man stands at the very pinnacle. Each and every cell in the human body, with thousands of enzymes in its mitochondria

and other subcellular structures, give a living proof of a supernatural power which supervises the smooth running of this complex machinery in such a smooth and sublime manner. The biological kingdom including humankind shows variety and diversity to evince the beauty and grandeur of nature in such a masterly way.

The glory of changing seasons demonstrates diversity in its fullest splendor. In the eyes of God every color or shade is beautiful. Like a supreme Architect and Master Sculptor He has created the animal kingdom including human beings in various shades, colors and hues to capture beauty, diversity and variety in all its ramifications.

We tend to stumble and fumble and are somewhat lost when we enter a grey zone. Why are certain people targeted for tragedy and catastrophe when they appear to be just innocent bystanders? In these trying circumstances some mortals who are less stout in their faith, heart and soul give up on God. We do not have simple answers to some mighty questions. In the bigger scheme of things we are not provided with all the answers. Some of the events and happenings which appear paradoxical may seem to lack any logical explanation. Some of the mysteries of nature are exploited by certain philosophers with an atheistic proclivity of mind.

Life in this world is certainly unpredictable. fickle and evanescent but it is not an illusion. It is real and has definite meanings and purpose. One who has not endeavored to look into the deeper strata of his or her inner world probably may end up empty handed and may be frustrated in the superficial realms of nihilism. He may be bogged down in Appollonian reverie and Dionysian insight like Schopenhauer and Nietzch.[1,2]

Some champions of pessimism achieved no more than being lost and mired in their empty swamps of meditations and hollow ruminations. Their erroneous thoughts were used as a paradigm of reference by succeeding generations. From the vantage of worldly point they were brilliant riddle-lovers but unfortunately their spiritual quest and digging into the deeper strata of inner world was either misguided or minimal. Nietzsche (1844-1900)[3] in particular, was almost a precocious genius and a brilliant thinker. However, his life was dogged and haunted perpetually by a mysterious organic disease which eventually culminated into premature decay, senility and insanity. For more than a decade of the last years of his life he was either housebound or a resident in a lunatic asylum. He rose to fame and name at the young age of 24 years and retired from professorship in Philology at the age of 34 years in Switzerland. He was insane at the age of 44 years and did not write a single word after that. Philosophers, like Nietzsche, were afflicted with some organic illness and could not get rid of their inner demons. It is not clear how much reliance should be placed on their writings and promulgations. Some of these philosophers were swayed by befuddled thinking and deranged minds. Their bold but totally erroneous expressions at times appear to evince their physical afflictions and emotional turmoil and imbalance. This is where it is difficult to put full reliance on the radical sayings or teachings of such dogmatic and pragmatic thinkers and philosophers who appeared to have suspicious mental and organic background when they try to challenge the existence of God. These prophets of doom, gloom and pessimism see nothing beautiful in the world except miseries, depression, hopelessness and helplessness without an end and are, in fact, reflecting the seething inner turmoil of their sick minds. Eyes will not see when mind does not know. When mind will see through the prism of dense fog and sprawling darkness all the time then nothing will look brighter than hues of utter darkness and gloom. However, if we accept the fact that nobody is destined to live in this universe forever and nothing is going to be totally permanent, then we are probably ready and willing to accept the fickleness and evanescence of this material universe. We come alone and then we leave and go alone. However, nothing stops us to render a stellar service to humankind and our Creator in the time span destined for us. This is what may have some permanence and metaphorical immortality and a way to join the pantheons of greats in the hereafter.

Sojourn of life is not an absurd and useless endeavor or adventure. It certainly has profound meanings and significance. Those who understand and appreciate the

fact that they have a noble opportunity to serve humankind and their Maker in a meaningful way probably have really understood the reason and rationale for their existence.

To the champions of existentialism life is absurd and has not real meanings, aim or purpose. To these brooding philosophers life is empty of any glorious aim or purpose. To them life is just full of appalling miseries and eternal unhappiness. To them life is not only totally absurd but also one is trapped in the vortex of misfortune.

They feel trapped in eternal misery and hopelessness. The champions of such ideology have some brilliant proponents such as, Franz Kafka, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camuce, Frederick Nietzche and Arthur Schopennauer.[4,5,6,7,8] However, their main problem is poor methodology of knowing and searching the meaning of this life, on this planet and hereafter. Their endeavors are meant to be noble but clearly misguided and myopic. They do not reach any further than scraping the superficial strata of their inner world. They have never endeavored to evolve a connection between themselves and their supreme Maker. Their wanderings are more superficial and somewhat perfunctory. They end up in screaming their inner turmoil and sufferings.

In the physical evolution of human beings ontogeny appears to repeat the story of phylogeny. Human embryo and fetus appear to show all the phylogenetic stages and racial details before emerging and gracing this world at the end of gestational period of nine months. This is again a mesmerizing and breathtaking miracle of God that a tiny speck of life following the union and fertilization of ovum with a sperm goes through the stages of morula, blastocyst and eventually emerges as a full fledged human being. The first two months of life in the womb are embryonic and are characterized by rapid and prodigious growth, differentiation of tissues and formation of structures and the later seven months show maturation of these tissues as a prelude to its emergence into separate and independent existence. Once again spectacular beauty, supreme elegance and breathtaking precision are at full display. The mighty hands of the supreme Master and Architect are quite visible behind this superb creation.

At each step of development one witnesses admirable and spectacular correlation between form and function. We are constantly reminded that even the minutest genetic mutation can have the most devastating and appalling results. Here too God has given us the wisdom and understanding to fathom the mysteries of our DNA sequence, subtleties of RNA and complex role of our mitochondria.

Evolution in the biological kingdom appears to have stages. The processes of natural selection and survival of the fittest have some truths and perhaps evince a dynamism in life.[9,10] Life is not static but has dynamism, adaptation to changing circumstances and renascence of Renaissance at all phases of changing environments.

Life is endowed with elegant elasticity, flexibility and plasticity. Life is given a chance to be the captain of its own ship, to mold itself in a vicissitudenous world. It is not meant to waft along but take a detour of improvement and betterment at any time warranted. Dynamism in life also shows purpose and subtle meanings and rationale. It was created to serve humankind and its Creator in the most elegant and meaningful way. Those who knew this glorious message were aware of the fact that they were on the right and noble pathway.

In the realms of spiritual evolution there are some noble steps. To rise on the rungs of the spiritual ladder there is a certain methodology and discipline. Once that discipline is adopted there is no stopping to it. The process becomes self-propelling and gains momentum as one tastes the fruits of spiritual success. God loves moderation and balance. He does not advise or promote intense asceticism or fanaticism. He appreciates the stellar deeds rendered in the service of humankind and Him without significant pomp and ceremony.

The true ambassadors of God let life flourish and blossom rather than to destroy it. When they are in a position of power and prestige they do not use power with undue brutal force.

They follow the dictates of reason and voice of conscience.

These champions of liberty, equality, peace and justice and universal fraternity, are not only genuine apostles of humankind but are also true ambassadors of God. They cross the hurdles of *Nafse Ammarah* and reach the stage of *Nafse Mutma'innah* with dazzling pace because of their unrelenting devotion and dedication to the cause of genuine service to humankind and their ultimate Master - Allah Almighty.

These are the glorious people who have excelled in discharging their duties to humankind (*Haqooqul Ibad*) and to their glorious Master (*Haqooqullah*) with utmost dedication and perfection. There is no spiritual twilight or precipitous decline nor a fading evening star for them but they have an eternal sunshine which seems to keep emanating, spewing and flooding from an inexhaustible fountain. They are not like a mere froth wafting along at the crest of the wave of time but are in fact, strong, sturdy and undaunted spiritual swimmers who have tamed the ferocious torrents of the most tempestuous waves of worldly trappings, name and fame. These spiritual stalwarts, indefatigable champions of humankind and monumental foun -tainhead figures always have an uplifting impetus for a new wave of collective thinking.

Their spiritual zeal, fervor and ardor in their advancing years does not appear to have a sunset or twilight nor is it reminiscent of a flickering or fading candle but rather looks like fierce and blazing fire which keeps escalating in intensity and ferocity all the time.

Because of their stellar deeds coupled with ruthless determination and persistence despite brutal hurdles and impediments, God Almighty in His utmost graciousness and magnanimity Says in the Holy Qur'an:

يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفْسُ ٱلْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝ ٱرْجِعِىٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ۝ فَٱدْخُلِى فِى عِبَٰدِى ۝ وَٱدْخُلِى جَنَّتِى ۝

And thou, O soul at peace! Return to thy Lord well pleased *with Him and* He well pleased *with thee.* So enter thou among My chosen servants. And enter thou My Garden. (89:28-31)

True knowledge is attained through the noble channels of inference, sight and experience as clearly pointed out by the Promised Messiah[as].[11] Perseverance, persistence and steadfastness in perils and adversity play the role of keys that unlock the presence of God. When reasoning and logic with which humankind is abundantly gifted, reach an exhaustible limit revelation and vision tend to guide true, faithful and steadfast servants of God in attaining the ultimate truth about the Divine Existence.[12]

The Holy Qur'an graciously states:

"Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the incomprehensible, the All-Aware" (6:104)

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JESUS[as] IS DEAD

A. R. Dard

The three books of the Promised Messiah[as] — *Fathe Islam, Taudihe Marãm* and *Izala-e-Auham* — spread far and wide. They brought tears of joy to the eyes of the righteous, for they recognized the word of their God. They circulated these books among their friends and relations so that they might also partake of the spiritual blessing. The hearts of seekers after truth were illumined and they were comforted by the reasonable exposition of their problems which they found in these books. The number of the faithful increased. But the blind leaders of the blind stumbled and fell. One wonders at their mentality. The type of *mullah* who opposed Ahmadis in those days has now completely disappeared from the scene. Already the youth of today is openly asserting in India that the Ahmadis are telling incredible stories when they tell him that his parents and their spiritual leaders really believed that Jesus[as] was still alive in the heavens with his physical body and that he would descend one day and establish Islam with the sword. But it is a fact that they did seriously believe in such things. Here are the names of a few publications.

الدليل على اثبات حيات مسيح

Addalil 'Ala thhbati Hayati Masih

By Karam Ilahi, printed at the Islamia Press, Lahore, 1-7-1891

2. الفتح الربانى فى الرد على القاديانى

Al-Fatha Rabbani Firrade "alal Qadiani

By Shaikh Husain bin Muhsin Ansari, written in Bhopal and printed at the Ansari Press, Delhi, 1311 A.H.

3) غايت المرام

Ghaital Maram

By Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman of Patiala, printed at the Islamia Press, Lahore, 1892.

4) *Dirratud Durrani*

By Muhammad Hadirulla Khan, printed at the Hashmi Press, Meerut, 1318 A. H.

The last publication was almost entirely destroyed by an extraordinary flood.

It is indeed distressing to think of the long and horrible spectacle presented by Christians in so far as they have marred the sacred pages of human history throughout the ages. Evil indeed was the day when the idea of the Trinity was conceived. Not only were the simple and sublime teachings of Jesus[as] corrupted, but a systematic and organized effort has since been made on a worldwide scale to uphold the untruth in every possible manner. If God had not happily promised the complete preservation of the text and the meaning of the Holy Qur'an, they might well have succeeded in interpolating and distorting the Holy Scripture just as they have done with the Bible. In the dark ages, however, it appears that through their persistent and insidious efforts they succeeded in deceiving a number of Muslims by manufacturing false stories about Jesus[as] (see *Fathul Bayan* Vol. 2. p. 49). They exploited the craze of the credulous for curiosity, and thus in course of time put into their mouths what they themselves wanted to say. Fabrication assumed the guise of fact: and Muslims began to interpret the words of the Qur'an in accordance with untrue and fantastic stories. I cite here a passage of the Holy Qur'an round which has been cleverly woven a stupid texture of pure lies and fabrication. It runs:

وَّبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ ... يَكُوْنُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيْدًا

(Al-Nisä' 4:1 57-60)

Before giving the whole of its correct translation 1 should like to take its parts and point the erroneous conclusions drawn therefrom. The words

وَمَا قَتَلُوْهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوْهُ

(Al-Nisa 4:158)

simply mean 'they did neither kill him nor crucify him': but it is concluded that, as Jesus[as] was neither

killed nor crucified, he must have gone up to the sky!

The other words

وَلٰكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ

(Al-Nisa' 4:158)

are said to mean that the likeness of Jesus[as] was cast upon another person. The curious part of it is that there is not only one story that speaks of the casting of the likeness of Jesus[as]; there are several stories. I give below the various versions to bring out the extreme absurdity of all such traditions.

1. The likeness of Jesus[as] was cast upon only one of his disciples.

1a. The likeness was cast upon all of his disciples.

2. Jesus[as] invited his disciples to have his likeness cast upon them.

2a. God cast his likeness upon an enemy.

3. There were at that time12, 1 7, 18, I 9 disciples with him.

3a. There was with only one person on whom the likeness was cast.

4. . The man on whom his likeness was cast said 'I am Jesus.

4a. The man on whom the likeness was cast said, 'I am not Jesus.'

5. Jesus[as] was very restless that night.

5a. He was quite calm.

6. The man on whom his likeness was cast was a Jew.

6a. He was a disciple.

7. The likeness was cast.

7a. It was not cast.

8. Another person was killed.

8a. No one was killed.

9. A few persons arrested Jesus[as].

9a. Four thousand Jews came for the purpose.

Intelligent commentators like Abu Hayyan have discarded all such stories. The words of the Qur'an :

شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ

(Al-Niss 4: 158)

according to the idiom of the language only mean that the matter was made obscure for them, or that Jesus~ was made to appear to them like one crucified.

Then there are the words

بَلْ رَّفَعَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْهِ

(Al-Nisa 4:159)

which are interpreted to mean that Jesus[as] was lifted up to the sky, while the words are wholly inapt to convey that meaning.

The word بَلْ shows that it has been used for the refutation of some false charges stated against Jesus[as] in the previous lines— the charges were about his birth and death; to refute these charges Allah says that He exalted him and made him honorable in His presence. There are no words here to show that Jesus[as] was taken up to heaven both in body and in soul. Every Muslim prays while sitting in his *Salat*

وَارْفَعْنِيْ

but no sane person would ever believe that it means bodily uplifting of the devotee. Allah is not confined to the blue sky. He is Omnipresent. if Jesus[as] is gone to Him he should also be wherever He exists. it is really an idiom expressive of one's spiritual dignity and honor. There is a tradition in the *Muslim,* the well-known authority in *Hadith,* which throws a flood of light on this point and clearly shows that even if the word:

سماء

(sky) had been used here instead of Allah, even then the verse could not have meant anything else but spiritual honor and exaltation. It runs as follows:

اِذَا تَوَاضَعَ الْعَبْدُ رَفَعَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَى السَّمَآءِ السَّابِعَةِ

'When a person shows humility, Allah lifts him up to the seventh heaven.'

Will the *mullahs* draw the same conclusions here also? Will

they believe that every act of humility literally lifts a person up to heaven in both body and spirit? Certainly, there can be no bigger folly than such an inference. Why then draw such inferences in the case of Jesus[as]? Why should he be sent up to heaven alive? Was not this earth sufficient for him?

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ۝ أَحْيَاءً وَّ أَمْوَاتًا ۝

'Have We not made the earth sufficient for the living and the dead?' (Al-Mursalat 77:26-27)

The last portion of the verse under consideration is said to be the strongest argument in support of physical ascent. It is translated as follows:

'There is no Jew or Christian who shall not believe in Jesus before his death.'

Do these words by themselves show that Jesus is now sitting in the sky in his physical body? But the fantastic conclusion is drawn thus. As, according to this translation, Jews and Christians have not all believed in Jesus[as], therefore he must be alive. But it is forgotten that if Jesus[as] be supposed to be alive, even then all Jews and Christians cannot believe in Jesus[as] because many generations of them are dead. How can they then believe? So it is clear that if they have all to believe in Jesus~, it must be supposed that along with him Jews and Christians are also alive, which is obviously absurd.

Now I give here the correct translation of the passage without twisting the words so as to yield farfetched meanings:

"And because of their disbelief and their uttering against Mary a grievous calumny and their saying, "We have slain the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of God!"—they slew him not, nor crucified him, but he was made to appear to them like one crucified, and those who differ about him are certainly in doubt by reason of this fact; they have no knowledge thereof, - but only follow a conjecture; they slew him not for certain. Nay, Allah exalted him to Himself and Allah is Mighty, Wise. And there is none among the people of the Book but will believe in this fact (the crucifixion of Jesus[as]) before his death; and on the day of Resurrection Jesus shall be a witness against them." (Al-Nisa' 4:157-160).

It should be noted that the Jews speak here of Jesus[as] as a Messenger of God while as a matter of fact they do not believe him to be one. The reason is simple. They call him so only derisively because *Deut.* 2 1-23 says:

'He who is hanged is accursed of God.'

What the Qur'anic verse lays down is that every Jew and Christian must, according to their creeds, continue to believe in the death of Jesus[as] on the Cross. The Jew because he wants to show that the curse of God fell upon Jesus[as], and the Christian because he wants to affirm the doctrine of Atonement. Anyhow, it is clear that there is nothing in the Quran which refers in any way to the corporeal ascension of Jesus[as] to heaven.

On the other hand, there are many verses in the Holy Quran which clearly refer to the death of Jesus[as] as having happened according to the ordinary laws of nature governing mortal beings. I cite here a few of them:

"And when Allah will say, "0 Jesus, son of Mary. didst thou say to men," Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah? He shall answer." Holy art Thou... I said nothing to them save that which Thou didst command me, to wit, "Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord". And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the watcher over them, and Thou art witness over all things."

It is clear from these words that Christians have begun to worship Jesus[as] and Mary since the death of Jesus[as] and not before, He does not say here that he ever returned to this world. In another place the Qur'an says:

"And those on whom they call beside Allah create not anything, but they are themselves created. They are dead, not living; and they know not when they will be raised." (Al-Nabi 16:21, 22).

Now it is an admitted fact that Christians worship Jesus[as] and call on him, therefore according to this verse Jesus[as] is dead and not living. Again we read:

'And Muhammad is naught but a Messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him. If then he dies or be slain, will ye turn back on your heels?' (Al-e-'Imran 3:145).

(See Tafsir Mazhari by Sanaullah of Panipat and Tafsir Tahsirur Rahman by Zainud Din Ali Mahami and Tafsir Jami ui Bavan by Sayyid Mu'inud Din lhne Safiud Din and Futuhate Ilahiyya and Tafsir Safi.

Mahmud Shaltoot. an eminent theologian of Al-Azhar. Cairo. declares that Jesus[as], according to the Qur'an. is not alive in the heavens and that he died like all mortal beings (See the Weekly Ar-Rasalat, dated 11/5/1943, Vol. 1, No. 642).

When the Holy Prophet[saw] died Umar[ra] would not believe it. So Abu Bakr[ra] recited this verse and then Umar[ra] realized that he had actually died like the rest of the prophets *(Bukhari* and *Qastalani* and *Kitabul Milal wan Nihal* by Shahrastami).

I may also mention here one or two other traditions which show that Jesus[as] is dead and cannot return to this world., *Ibni Kathir* Vol. 2. *Al-Waqitu wal Jawahir, Sharah Mawahibul Ludunniyya,* Vol. 6, *Fathul Bayan* Vol. 2, and *Madarijus Salikin* of Ibni Qayyam Vol. 2, all mention a saying of the Holy Prophet[saw] to the following effect:

'If Moses[as] and Jesus[as] were alive, they could not but follow me.'

Again, the following books record the tradition that Jesus[as] had lived for 120 years: *Hijajul Kiramah* (p. 428), *Ibni Kathir* Vol. 2, *Mawãhibul Ludunniyya* Vol. 1, *Kanzul 'Ummal* Vol. 6.

it should be remembered that, according to Islam, the dead do not return to this world, He who is dead is gone for ever. Times have indeed changed. Ahmad[as] says:

'The Islamic prophecy that the Promised Messiah would break the Cross indicated that in his time, with God's will, means would be brought into existence with which the truth About the Crucifixion would be laid bare. Then would the end come and the days of this doctrine would be numbered. But not with any war and voilence. it would, on the other hand, come about only through heavenly means which would appear in the world by way of scientific research and inference." *(Jesus in India).*

These words of Ahmad[as] are absolutely true. The present is the age of reason and research. Ahmad[as] has indeed laid bare the truth about the Crucifixion.

For centuries the Christian world had remained engulfed in complete darkness with regard to the Crucifixion. It appears that the horrors of the Inquisition had benumbed and paralyzed the very brain of man. Even the neighboring countries and communities had been deceived and duped. It is really with the approach of the advent of the Promised Messiah[as], like the approach of sun that the spiritual darkness in which mankind was engulfed began to be dispelled. (See the *Review of Religions,* London, Sept. 1938). Ahmad[as], the Promised Messiah was born in 1835, and a little earlier, people, called Rationalists among Christians, had begun to look upon the Crucifixion from a different angle of vision and as the advent took place truth began to dawn upon them more and more clearly.

Dr. Elsie Louise Morris, of 229, Alexandria street, Los Angeles, 'in making copies of rare books and manuscripts in the Library of the Christian Israelites about 1904 came across the MS. copy of a letter (published in 1919) of the Essene Elder in Jerusalem to his brother elder in Alexandria,' in which the eyewitness states as follows:

'Joseph and Nicodemus examined the corpse, and greatly moved, the latter, pulling Joseph aside, "As sure as I know anything about organical life and nature, as sure it is possible to save him." But Joseph did not understand him, and he advised us not to tell John anything of what we had heard. Indeed, it was a secret which was to save our brother from death. Nicodemus shouted, "we must immediately have the corpse with its bones unbroken, because he may still be saved;

then conceiving his want of caution, he went on in a whisper, saved from being infamously buried." He persuaded Joseph to set aside his interests, to save their friend by immediately going to Pilatus and prevailing upon him to allow them to take Jesus from the cross that very night and put him in the sepulcher, hewn in the rock close by, and which belonged to Joseph.

(It is curious how some Christian missionaries lose their balance of mind. Rev. W. P. Hates of the old, St. John's College. Lahore, was particularly upset at the discovery of this book. He says: 'the English is so full of grammatical errors and so unidiomatic. that the book does not deserve the serious attention of any student'.)

My dear brethren, I will let you know that Pilate often sold the bodies of the crucified to their friends, that they might bury them. And the centurion was friendly to me, as he had conceived from the events that Jesus was an innocent man. When the two thieves were beaten by the soldiers with heavy clubs, and their bones broken, the centurion went by the cross of Jesus, saying to his soldiers, "Do not break his bones, for he is dead".

For Pilate had a great reverence for Joseph, and secretly repented of the execution. When Nicodemus saw the wound, flowing with water and blood, his eyes were animated with new hope, and he spoke encouragingly, foreseeing what was to happen. He drew Joseph aside to where I stood, some distance from John, and spoke in low, hurried tone, "Dear friends, be of good cheer, and go to work. Jesus is not dead; he only seems to be because his strength was exhausted". While Joseph was with Pilate I hurried over to our colony, and fetched the herbs that are useful in such cases. But I advise you not to let John know that we intend to reanimate the corpse of Jesus, for I fear he could not conceal his joy; and dangerous indeed would it be to let the people know it, as our enemies would then put us to death, as well as him.

Now thirty hours had passed since the assumed death of Jesus. And when the brother heard a slight noise in the grotto, and stepped in to watch what would happen, he smelt a strange odor in the air, as is natural when the earth is going to vomit fire. And the youth saw with untold joy that the corpse moved the lips and breathed. He hastened to assist him, and heard slight sounds rise from his breast, the face assumed a living appearance, and the eyes opened and gazed astonished at the novice of our order.

Nicodemus, who was an experienced physician, said on the road that the peculiar atmosphere in the air by the revolution of the elements was beneficial to Jesus, and that he never had believed that Jesus actually was dead. And he said that the blood and water that flowed from the wound was a sure sign that life was not extinct.'

Dr. B. F. Austin, of Los. Angeles, says:

'There is absolutely nothing in the truthful story of the Crucifixion to render the death of Jesus on the cross a necessity. In the first place, only the hands were pierced, as we learn on the best authority. The suffering and danger from loss of blood and pain from the hand wounds was very much lessened by the custom of binding the arms very tightly to the cross, partially stopping the blood circulation and benumbing the pain by pressure upon the nerves. Those crucified in other lands were allowed to remain on the cross till death resulted naturally from the crucifixion, and in some cases, we are told, survived for a week after the infliction of the penalty. Jesus[as], a sensitive, that is peculiarly a sufferer, after the flogging and burden-bearing, naturally swooned under the pain of the crucifixion. There is no mention in the 'Letter' of any wound in the feet, or any healing treatment applied thereto.

If Jesus[as] were, therefore, as the 'Letter' states, a member of the Order of the Essenes, and were befriended, as far as the rules of the Order would allow any public activities in apparent opposition to the State, by members of his Order, what is more natural to suppose than that he was shielded from having his bones broken by the soldiers, and his body carefully laid away in the sepulcher of another Essene and, by arts of healing well known to the Order, restored to consciousness and to

active life again?

The actual flowing of water and blood from the wound in the side is a great physiological proof that life was not extinct in his body at that time.'

H. Spencer Lewis has written a *Mystical Life of Jesus,* in which be states that Jesus[as] did not die on the Cross and that the Essene physicians helped him to regain strength and vitality.

Mr. E. B. Docker.. M. A., District Court Judge, Sydney, holds the same view in his valuable book *If Jesus did not die* ***upon*** *the Cross* (1920).

Dog Jesus pa Korset (pp 190, Stockholm, 1928) is an excellent and brilliant book in the Swedish language. it was written by Dr. Hugo Toll, the most eminent medical authority of Sweden, who remained in charge of the Stockholm Hospital from 1897 to 1923. The learned Doctor proves medically that Jesus[as] did not die on the cross.

But it must not be forgotten that the number of such thoughtful people in different parts of the world, is extremely small. In the great multitude of the world it is like a stray streak of light which tries to penetrate into the pitch darkness of the night with the approach of the sun.

The Jews as a body still persist in their false belief that Jesus[as] was an impostor and so died on the cross as a criminal. The Christian churches continue to believe that he died an accursed death on the cross and rose up from the dead because he was the only begotten son of God. The Muslims cling to their dying belief that Jesus[as] is still alive in the heavens with his physical body. But nevertheless it is true that, through heavenly means, the hearts of men in general are fast swinging away from all such untenable doctrines and inexplicable mysteries. The irrefutable evidence that Ahmad[as], the Promised Messiah, has collected; the testimony of every possible description that he has put forward and the vast store of reasons and arguments that he has supplied have caused an irresistible ferment in the world of religion. It was God who revealed the truth to the Promised Messiah[as]'. Jews, Christians and Muslims are all questioning their beliefs. And the day is not distant when truth will be recognized by men in increasing numbers and the darkness of falsehood and doubt will ultimately disappear from the whole world. Staunch advocates of the doctrine of the death of Jesus[as] on the cross and his resurrection have already turned into wavering apologists, having no confidence in themselves and a growing sense of shame seems to have overtaken them.

Strauss and Milligan allege that the early Christians were very enthusiastic about the resurrection and that therefore Jesus[as] must have died on the cross and risen again from the dead. To say that their enthusiasm itself is a proof of supernatural resurrection is only a fantastic conclusion of pure Christian credulity or sheer intellectual bankruptcy. As a matter of fact the New Testament does not even indicate that they had any enthusiasm at all (For a detailed refutation of this theory see the *Review of Religions,* London, Sept. 1938). There are others, a vast majority of the Christians of today, who have now ceased to believe in such inexplicable mysteries. Some of them even say that the death of Jesus[as] on the cross is not a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. This is the position which was taken up by Karl August Hase (1800—1890). When I wrote and published a tract, putting before Europe the reasons which the Promised Messiah[as] has given to prove that Jesus[as] did not die on the cross, in London in 1924 (its German translation was published from Berlin in *1925),* I received a number of letters from the Christian authorities of various places in which they took up the same attitude.

(It reminds one of a similar attitude adopted against the Promised Messiah[as] by the mullahs of India. When he first proclaimed that Jesus[as]' did not ascend to heaven with his physical body and that he died a natural death, the mullahs were infuriated and declared him to be an apostate and an infidel. But now the times are changed. The Promised Messiah[as] has established the fact that Jesus[as]' died a natural death in Kashmir. So people are no longer interested in the old controversy. Now the same mullahs simply adopt the attitude that the question is immaterial to Islam! it is

not fundamental; we need not discuss it! Needless to say, if Jesus[as] was really alive in the heavens and it was he who was to come, there was no chance for Ahmad[as] to claim himself to be the Promised Messiah.)

Such Christians, in their bewilderment, forget the fact that if Jesus[as] did not die on the cross there could be no Atonement. God did not then reconcile mankind to Himself in Jesus[as], and there was no vicarious sacrifice and no Savior. If there was no risen Savior there was no experience of God coming through the humanity, of Jesus[as] and there was no son of God. If there was no son of God the doctrine of the Holy Trinity falls to the ground. With all these distinctive features gone there is nothing left of the creed of Christianity.

'There is another group of modern Christians who are much more advanced and independent in their views. Their confusion is worse - confounded. I reproduce here the words of a typical exponent.

Dr. Albert Scheweitzer, of the University of Strassburg, says:

"There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus. The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the Kingdom of God never had any existence... This image has not been destroyed from without, it has fallen to pieces, cleft and disintegrated by the concrete historical problems which came to the surface one after another.. .The historical foundation of Christianity as built up by rationalistic, by liberal, and by modern theology no longer exists; but that does not mean that Christianity has lost its historical foundation. Jesus means something to our world because a mighty spiritual force streams forth from Him and flows to our time also. This fact can neither be shaken nor confirmed by any historical discovery. It is the solid foundation of Christianity... further we must be prepared to find that the historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence, to religion. But the truth is, it is not Jesus as historically known, but Jesus as spiritually arisen within men, who is significant for our time and can help it.'

But the learned writer does not say what the spiritual force is which is supposed to be streaming forth from Jesus[as]. If he lives only in the imagination of the people like all other legendary figures and Christians are compelled to look upon him only as an excellent character in fiction, we are afraid there is nothing left of Christianity as a religion. Perhaps critical scholars will do well to revise their position in regard to the historicity of Jesus Christ[as]. The spiritual force supposed to be coming from him is a still more evasive thing. It will simply melt into nothing at the very touch of modem criticism. Falsehood has no legs. The Promised Messiah[as] has 'come like the dawn with a flood of light, that darkness may flee away!' The old heathen gods who had crept back and who had dug themselves in once more are already being thrown out of the churches; it will not take long to disillusion the minds of the people of this will-o'-the wisp of an imaginary spiritual force.

A lot of intelligent Christians already realize that there is something essentially wrong with their faith. It has indeed disappeared to a very great extent from Russia and Germany. About Britain Dr. W. R. Mathews, Dean of St. Paul's, speaking at a conference of the Modern Christians Union at Cambridge in *1935,* said:

> 'I do not believe that more than 20 per cent of the people of this country are in any possible sense of the word Christians.'

Now the percentage is far less.

The discovery of the tomb of Jesus[as] is really the last nail in the coffin of the false Christian god who had been bolstered up throughout the world for nearly two thousand years with every earthly art, artifice, artificiality and violence. It has not only dethroned him from the hearts of men, but has also brought him down from the heavens to be buried here below. The shrine in Kashmir does not contain only the earthly remains of Jesus[as], the Prophet of God, but with its discovery is also buried the imaginary and unholy figure of Antichrist, known as the only son of God, which had usurped the place of Jesus[as] in the world after him.

This also has been brought about with scientific research and heavenly means, not by war or violence.

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Who Am I?

Najia Humayun, Atlanta Jama'at

Who Am I?

Fourteen, young and optimistic, they only see this one-sided view of me
But I yearn to be more, so much more, so much more
I am mature and informed about our dreadful world, erudite about more than just what I must know about pronouns, appositives and the Pythagorean Theorem
Knowledgeable about the oil tainting the blue water in the gulf, the floods overcoming the people and poor government Pakistan, the mudslides taking over the innocent children in Brazil
Wishing for a way to change myself
Hoping for a way to dream of a better place
Yet I am stunted by 'who I am'

Who Am I?

A girl colored caramel by the hands of our Creator
A proud Muslim, one who has seen miracles come about before my very eyes
A blessed Ahmadi Muslim, criticized in even in my original country, not given the right to vote where my parents grew up, and from where my roots drink their pride
Yet still I will always stay true to my faith, my creed, for I know with my religion who I am
They may not let me follow my dreams, if they do not heed to what they wrote on paper
But what should it matter to anyone what faith I am, why should they care about my faith more than theirs?
I am a respecter of all religions, be they atheist or polytheistic
But when will they learn?

Who Am I?

A Student, working hard, striving to maintain excellence in academics
A violist, practicing, practicing…
There will always be someone better, yet I strive and I strive for I know somewhere hidden in the bowels of my soul that I can succeed
A pianist, playing tunes of sadness which draw tears out of barren tear ducts, and tunes of happiness which make hearts flutter and distressing thoughts whisk away with the wind, at least for a moment
A sister, nurturing my young brothers when hard times cross their paths
A sister, hurting many a time more than helping
A daughter, cherished and cared for even after my parents scold me at my actions
A friend, happy and joyous, ready to have a great time

Who am I?

A girl, just a girl
But I know I can be something more
I know I am an Ahmadi Muslim, a student, a daughter, a sister, a friend and a dreamer
But still, who is the girl within me, waiting to erupt like Typhon out of Mt. Aetna, with power and force beyond my dreams and their thoughts

I need to know, since I am only human
I do not want to be just another girl, another woman, another student, another wife, another friend another dreamer or another Muslim.
My need to be someone to impact our feeble society and help what is listened to by others is growing with every breath, every natural distaster, and every beat of my avid heart
But they tell me that the odds of me achieving my dreams are impractical, chimerical
But I will not heed to their menacing words
I will know what I want to be
And with my faith and my strength, I know that I can achieve my goals, my dreams, and my ambitions
Nothing can stop me
I am a bull with charging with three horns, a race car with no speed limit, a girl with a passion

I am whatever I dream to be

****

HONOR

Mr. Zohaib Khan who lives in Chicago, has done his graduation in top 10 % with B.Sc. Honors and earned the Outstanding Academic Achievement Award from my University. We congratulate him for his success and wish that he gets more awards and Blessings of Allah. *Ameen.*

A NOTE OF THANKS

My family is indebted to all the friends for their personal visits and messages of condolence via phone or email on the sad demise of our beloved mother recently and prayed for her forgiveness and nearness to Allah in the hereafter. Your love and the soothing words of sympathy were comforting for our bleeding hearts. May Allah bless you all and accept all the prayers made in favor our respected mother. *Ameen.* I thank you all on behalf of all my family. Nasir Jamil

TABLIGH ACTIVITIES, NEW YORK JAMA'AT

* On New Years Eve, there was a team of *Jama'at* members that went to Times Square to hand out flyers under our "Muslims for Peace" campaign. From Queens, 15 members traveled to the city to hand distribute flyers. Under the leadership of *Na'ib Qa'id,* Abu Bakr Rana Sb, the members were there for 2 1/2 hours.
* On January 8th, a Jewish Synagogue invited us to have a public discussion and interact with one another. The *Jama'at* was represented by 16 members, and they had about 35 people in attendance. Everybody started the meeting with their own respective prayers. It opened with a Question and Answer session. Through the two hours, Imam Daud Hanif Sahib noticed that through the religion of Judaism, there is no motive of preaching. Our purpose is to get our message across, which he did in a spectacular way.
* In the Corona/Jackson Heights area, we have been distributing a Spanish translated version of the "Muslims for Peace" flyer. The work is still in progress. On January 15th, a team of members traveled back to the Times Square area, to distribute another flyer entitled "Muslims for Loyalty". The team was there for about 2 hours and distributed approximately 800 pieces.
* Through the efforts of Mahmood Ahmad Bhutta Sahib, New York *Jama'at* has another *Bai'at.* Rana Nadeem Ahmad Sahib has joined the fold of Ahmadiyyat, by the Grace of Allah.

IMPORTANCE OF BEING CONNECTED TO KHILAFAT

Safeta Cerimovic

The main purpose of this article is to understand the importance of being connected to *Khilafat.* Ahmadi Muslims by the grace of Allah are so much blessed with having a *Khalifa.* We need to think on a daily basis if we are fulfilling our duty to *Khilafat.* I will focus on a few of the many reasons why the Ahmadi Muslims should give great importance of connection to *Khilafat.* The reasons are: God's promise in the Holy Qur'an about *Khilafat*, The prophecy of Holy Prophet[saw] about *Khilafat, the* Promised Messiah's[as] sayings about *Khilafat*, and our duty to *Khalifa.*

God Promise in the Holy Qur'an About Khilafat

In the Holy Qur'an God said: "Allah had promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then who so is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious." (Surah Al-Nur, 24:56)

In this verse Allah promises *Khilafat* to all Muslims. Allah has kept His promise and sent us the Promised Messiah[as] and *Khilafat* that came after him. Allah always keeps his promise; I think that it is time for us to give our promise to Allah that we will safeguard *Khilafat.* How do we safeguard our *Khilafat*? The simplest way is to connect to *Khilafat.* The best way to connect to *Khilafat* is to listen to our Hazoor's instructions and act upon those instructions, then and only then we will safeguard this enormous blessing that is given to us by Almighty Allah.

Another misunderstanding by many Ahmadi Muslims when it comes to being connected to *Khilafat* is this concept; if you listen to the *Khudba* every Friday and write a letter now and then asking for prayers from our Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] this is all that is required from us. The above mentioed is important, but it is not the only requirement from Ahamadi Muslims. Like I said earlier, the greatest importance above all is to act upon Hazoor's instructions. This is the best way that we can keep strong ties to *Khilafat* and safeguard *Khilafat.* We should never be in a position to not agree with our Hazoor, due to any reason. The disagreement should never be brought up in our families, in our mosques, in any gathering. Being the Ahmadi Muslims we know that every *Khutbah*, every address, every book that is written by our *Khalifas* is derived from the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], and from the books of the Promised Messiah[as]. There is absolutely no reason to question any of the advices, if you believe in message of the Holy Qur'an, if you believe in the *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and if you accepted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] as the Promised Messiah and *Imam Al-Mahdi.* We can not have this thinking that those instructions are for some other times. Islam is religion that will stay until the Day of Judgment and those instructions are here to stay until the Day of Judgment as well.

Prophecy of the Holy Prophet[saw] About Khilafat

To better understand the importance of being connected to *Khilafat,* I want to mention the saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] about *Khilafat.*

"Prophethood shall remain among you as long as Allah shall will. He will bring about its end and follow it with *Khilafat* on the precepts of prophethood for as long as He shall will and then bring about its end. A tyrannical monarchy will then follow and will remain as long as Allah shall will and then come to an end. There will follow thereafter

monarchial despotism to last as long as Allah shall will and come to an end upon His decree. There will then emerge *Khilafat* on the precept of Prophethood." The Holy Prophet[saw] said no more (Masnad Ahmad)

This *Hadith* is mentioning the time in which we live in. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] said:" There will then emerge *Khilafat* on the precept of Prophethood." After these words the Holy Prophet[saw] said no more. It is clear that this *Khilafat,* "Ahmadiyya *Khilafat"* is the one that we were waiting for a long time to safeguard us from the evil of this time. How can it safeguard us? Again I will repeat myself, by understanding the importance of *Khilafat.* There is not one question that I can think of that was not explained in depth by our *Khalifas.* Reading books and sermons or any literature that was written by our Caliphs you can feel Allah's guidance in all of their work. Because our *Khalifas* are guided by Allah Almighty the literature they write offers deeper explanations of Islamic Sharia. If you compare their literature to other Muslim scholars you will note the difference.

Sayings of the Promised Messiah[as] About Khilafat

The Promised Messiah[as] in the book The Will pp. 6-7 said:" Its coming is the better for you for it is permanent and will not be cut off till the Day of Judgment. This second manifestation will not happen till after my departure."

Another saying by the Promised Messiah[as] about *Khilafat* in the *Shahadatul Qur'an,* p. 58

"Since it is not possible for a man to live for ever, God has planned to keep alive, forever up to the last days, His messengers who bear a mark of distinction over the rest of His creatures. To this end he has established the institution of *Khilafat* so that the world shall never remain without the blessings of prophethood".

The Promised Messiah[as] prepared us for the coming of the second manifestation as well. He told us that it will not be cut off till the Day of Judgment. If you think about all the blessings of having one *Imam,* our Hazoor, we can not neglect our *Khilafat.* We have to support this unity desired by God. The unity of Ahmadi Muslims can not be found anywhere else in the world. We have to always have in mind the prayer from the Holy Qur'an that was recited often by the Promised Messiah[as]:

"My prayer and my sacrifice, my life and my death, are all for Allah, The Lord of the Worlds." (6:163). This is such a powerful prayer that in the hard times when we think that due to any worldly reasons we cannot fulfill what is instructed to us from our Hazoor just remember this prayer; that all we do should be done for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Our Duty to Khilafat

The most important duty of Ahmadi Muslims is to safeguard our *Khilafat.* There are many different ways to safeguard *Khilafat,* but the most important one is understanding the importance of being connected to *Khilafat.* The true connection to *Khilafat* and the *Khalifa* of our time is; when we hear instructions and guidance from our Hazoor we should not question them instead we should act upon them in our daily life. Our duty to listen to Hazoor's Friday Sermon is the essential point in staying connected to Hazoor. The *Khutbah* is our primary communication tool between Hazoor and us. But like I said earlier it is not just enough to listen Hazoor's *Khutbahs* so that we can justify ourselves when we are submitting reports, the true purpose of listening to Hazoor's *Khutbahs* and speeches is to correct ourselves and truly adopt Hazoor's advices. We need to treat Hazoor's *Khutbah* as the most important news that we heard during the week. By the Grace of God, Ahmadi Muslims are also blessed with MTA. Wherever we are we can listen to *Khutbahs* live or get translation in many different languages. The excitement of the *Khutbah* should be greater than the excitement when we are about to watch the new season of our favorite show or the excitement of sports fans when football, soccer, or basketball season is about to start. In each *Khutbah* we are receiving guidance to improve ourselves, to become better Muslims and to earn the love of Allah Almighty for the hereafter. If you are to compare the *Khutbah* with another entertainment show you can clearly see that it is more beneficial to listen to *Khutbah,* rather then waste precious time watching the shows.

My Point of View About Khilafat as a Convert

Being a convert to Ahmadiyyat, when I look back in the past at some challenges I can specifically point out my greatest challenge was connection

to the different culture. From day one I had no doubt in the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah and *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya, but since there was no support from the local community due to cultural differences I was being caught between family members and non Ahmadi Muslim friends. This caused me a lot of struggle and left me neither being fully with the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* nor the non-Ahmadi Muslims. There were some other confusions in regard to the purdah or hijab. My impression was that some of my Ahmadi sisters were ignoring this commandment from Allah and that caused me further confusion as to whether it was something that the *Khulafa* have instructed. By the Grace and Mercy of Almighty Allah I started researching the instructions from the literature of all the *Khalifas* and I found out that purdah is a must for all Muslim women. This and many other questions are answered in depth by our *Khalifas.* It was enough proof to me that *Khalifas* are there truly to safeguard the Islamic *Sharia* and *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. In this research I found what I have been missing for years and it is a connection to *Khilafat.* I started enjoying being a part of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and I am proud to say that I am an Ahmadi Muslim and I am proud to talk about our *Khilafat* and the importance of *Khilafat.* I hope for all of us, no matter if we are born Ahmadi Muslims or converts, we should reevaluate ourselves and think if we are doing our best to safeguard our *Khilafat,* because without *Khilafat* we would be lost like many other Muslims in the world. May Allah bless our Khalifatul Masih V[aba] and may Allah bless us all and give us strength to be example to others.

DIFFICULT IS THE PATH

Hadayatullah Hübsch

And when life now goes on
When our ashes are blown in the wind
When the soul sees new worlds
And flees away from the dark towards its Lord

And asks: what have I done for Thee
Thee, Who brought me on the right path
Who saved me from fire and doom
How great Thy Mercy, how meager my thanks

When it then pleads for pardon,
Is there still time or is it too late?
And the fragrance of the Garden already delights it
And it is worried if its life has succeeded

Not only then should there be regret
Nay, lightning of hope now erases the pain
The refuge which faith gives
Is only granted those who love Allah

Whose thoughts lucid and pure
Are clear to the humble one
So that he inclines towards the Prophet
To pray for light from the depth of his heart

So that anger vanishes and all the quarrels
Until hot veins are cool and fresh
And bird-like we strive upwards
Following the traces of true life

Some of those who had sank
Experience then peace new and clear
Difficult is the path to paradise
Blessed is Ahmad who showed it

(Translated from German into English by: Mrs. Harris Zafar)

PROGRESS OF AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN THE WAKE OF TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Imam Shamshad A. Nasir

This topic has been taken from the sermons and speeches of our beloved Imam Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba]. When we study the history of world religions, whenever a Messenger, Prophet or Reformer from God came for the guidance of mankind, he was always opposed. This is well documented in *Sura Ya Sin*, where Allah *Ta'ala* says,

يٰحَسْرَةً عَلَى الْعِبَادِ ۚ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ۝٣١

31. Alas for *My* servants! there comes not a Messenger to them but they mock at him.

Then in *Sura Al-Saff* Allah *Ta. 'ala* says:

يُرِيْدُوْنَ لِيُطْفِـُٔوْا نُوْرَ اللّٰهِ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللّٰهُ مُتِمُّ نُوْرِهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝٩

9. They desire to extinguish the light of Allāh with *the breath of* their mouths, but Allāh will perfect His light, even if the disbelievers hate *it*.

Therefore, the more opponents try to extinguish the light of Allah, the greater the divine support from Allah. He provides proof of His divine assistance by granting grand successes to a small community of believers. Who is not aware of the great opposition faced by Prophet Abraham[as] at the hands of Nimrod? He threw Abraham[as] in a pit of fire. Was Prophet Abraham[as] burned alive? On the contrary, the fire did not burn him at all. The Islamic community throughout history has been invoking blessings on him as per God's command. Did not Pharaoh relentlessly persecute Prophet Moses[as] and his nation? Did Pharaoh succeed in wiping out the name of Moses? Did those who beat Prophet Jesus[as], made him wear a crown of thorns and put him on the cross succeed in wiping out his name? And above all, did Abu Jahal, Abu Lahab, Uttba, Sheeba and other Meccan leaders who persecuted our beloved Prophet Muhammad[saw] succeed in humiliating him or did they earn the reward of Hell instead?

History bears witness to the fact that Prophet Muhammad[saw] was the one who succeeded in his mission. At the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiya, when the *Quraish* leaders thought they had succeeded in humiliating our Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], it was this very treaty that resulted in the blessings whereby the Holy Prophet[saw] and his companions later conquered Mecca. All the persecution and difficulties that Prophet Muhammad[saw] and his companions faced so steadfastly could not stop this community, and it was in our beloved Prophet's lifetime that Islam started to spread outside Arabia. *Alhamdulillah*!

Therefore, this too is decreed for the Community of Ahmadi Muslims. *Jama'at Ahmadiyya* presents an accurate picture of true Islam. All those situations that the Prophet Muhammad[saw] and his companions faced in the early era of Islam, it was destined that Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] and his community would also go through similar challenges. When Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] claimed he was from Allah *subhana ta'ala*, circumstances immediately took a turn for the worse for him. Some of those who supported him and were his friends prior to his claim became his enemies and turned against him, like Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, who traveled all across India and to some Islamic countries to meet 200 ulema and get their verdicts against the Promised Messiah[as]. His opponents indulged in prayer duels with him. In their zeal to humiliate him, the opponents sought every opportunity and excuse to attack him. They even accused him of murder and dragged him into court. But God Almighty repeatedly assured him and gave him the grand revelation of:

اِنِّیْ مُهِیْنٌ مَّنْ اَرَادَ اِهَانَتَكَ

I shall humiliate him who designs to humiliate you.

(Tadhkrah, English translation, 2009, p. 279)

And at another time:

Mein tairi tabligh ko dunya kai kinaroan tak pahunchaoon ga

(I shall carry your message to the ends of the earth)

(Tadhkrah, English Translation, 2004, p. 405)

And then in English, Allah gave him the glad tiding that:

"I shall give you a large party of Islam."

Along with these promises from Allah the Almighty, the opponents increased in their persecution of Masih Mau'ood[as] even more. His opponents would go to great lengths to keep people from going to Qadian. They would lie in wait at the local railway station to prevent those who wished to visit the Promised Messiah[as]. But this small seedling of Ahmadiyyat that was planted and nourished by God Almighty continued to grow.

Hadhrat Maulvi Abdul Latif Shaheed[ra] heard about the Promised Messiah[as] and when he came to visit him, he realized he was true and accepted Hadhrat Masih Mau-'ood[as]. When Abdul Latif returned to his home in Kabul, Afghanistan as a follower of the Imam Mahdi, the opponents raised a huge clamor and proclaimed that by taking *Bai'at* at the hand of Masih Mau'ood[as], he had renounced Islam. The King of Afghanistan, at the urging of the clergy, ordered him put to death. He was dragged with a rope tied to his nose and then stoned to death. Upon hearing of this news, Hadhrat Masih Mau-'ood[as] said, "O Abdul Latif, thousands of blessings be upon you because you have shown in my lifetime a great example of steadfastness for truth." (*Tazkirah,* pg.60) Abdul Latif Shaheed Sahib[ra] gave his life in defense of the truth of the Promised Messiah and *Imam Mahdi.*

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] bore all manner of persecutions with patience against the tsunami of opposition with the assistance of God. And during his lifetime, hundres of thousands of people accepted him. This is the victory of Islam that the Promised Messiah[as] was promised. It is appropriate at this point to mention an opponent's statement in 1908 after the passing of Masih Mau'ood[as] and the election of Hadhrat *Khalifa Awwal*[ra]. He said, "What is left of the *Mirzais* now that their head is cut off? The person who is now their Imam won't be able to do much except recite the Qur'an in some mosque." Hadhrat *Khalifa Awwal*[ra], upon hearing that said, "*Subhan Allah*! that is exactly the task. May Allah give us the opportunity."

The Ahmadiyya Community faced another terrible trial in 1914 immediately after the demise of Hadhrat Maulvi Nooruddin, Khalifatul Masih Awwal[ra]. At that time, an influential group which included some prominent companions of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] separated from the Community because of their insistence that *Khilafat* was not necessary. This was only a vain attempt to hide their displeasure at the election of 25-year-old Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad as Khalifatul Masih II. This group of defectors, led by Maulana Muhammad Ali, left Qadian and settled in Lahore. At their departure they said "Qadian will become like an abandoned house now." At the time the *Jama'at* in Qadian went through a terrible trial, but the mocking prediction by the Lahori Ahmadis was visited upon their own house. Allah the Almighty placed His mighty Hand on the Community in Qadian, strengthening it and uniting it on the foundation of *Khilafat.*

And the person who became a *Khalifa* at a tender age of 25 remained at that station for 52 long years and the world saw how that young man guided the ship of Ahmadiyyat through stormy waters and steered it to safe harbors. And aside from the threat from internal dissent, the opponents of Ahmadiyyat were hardly sleeping. They were busy at work trying to destroy the *Jama'at.* Slowly but surely, these efforts of the enemies converged into big campaigns, and in 1934, the *Ahrar* group announced that: "We will destroy the Ahmadis in Qadian and nobody will be able to recognize the grave of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. And nobody will remember what Ahmadiyyat is."

Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin, Mahmud Ahmad Khalifatul Masih II[ra] at that point advised the *Jama'at* to show patience and forbearance. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] then initiated the program of *Tehrik-e-Jadid.* He asked members to incline towards Allah with supplications and bring about remarkable changes in themselves that will divert the storms of opposition against the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] said,

"The *Ahrar* began to oppose us. At that time I announced in one of my Friday sermons:

". . .that you should not be worried by the *Ahrar's* campaign. God will make me and my Community victorious... I see the Earth moving from under the opponents' feet and I can see their approaching destruction. No matter how many more plans they make or however much success they proclaim, the more clear their death appears to me."

Brothers and Sisters, in this statement there is a prophecy as well. Whenever an opponent will try to attack and destroy Ahmadiyyat, that opponent will lose ground and will always be defeated. *Insha Allah.*

Allah *ta'ala* did not fulfill the desire of our enemies that they will destroy Qadian; rather, He raised the flag of Islam Ahmadiyyat in 198 countries. They tried to rob the peace of mind of the weak and instead their own arrogance and pride got wiped away.

What is this plan of Tehrik-*e-Jadid*? In reality it was a plan for the revival of Islam in which Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] made 27 demands to the *Jama'at.* As far as the original demand of 27,000 rupees in one year made by Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] was concerned, about the *Jama'at,* even in the face of severe opposition, contributed 127,000 rupees and within three years offered a sacrifice of 400,000 rupees.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] referring to the condition of the *Jama'at* in that time, said in his Friday Sermon of November 5th, 2004 that the overall condition of the *Jama'at* was not good -- there were people who offered dimes, quarters or just a rupee or two; and mostly it was these people who starved and their children who ate stale bread and many times they went to bed hungry. They did so gladly in their conviction that God's appointed *Khalifa* had called them to be his helper because the enemy had declared they would crush Ahmadiyyat and dishonor the places of honor in Qadian. But *Alhamdulillah*, all the evil plots of the opponents failed as was predicted by Khalifatul Masih II[ra].

One well-known political personality of the *Ahrar* group, Mr. Masood Khaddar Posh acknowledged this fact later when he made this statement: "In 1934, after the *Ahrar* Convention where we announced our plans to destroy Ahmadiyyat, when Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin gave his answer that he saw the earth slipping out from under the feet of the *Ahrar*, we all had a big laugh because it seemed so unreal. But after some time the *Ahrar* group committed a political mistake and in reality the earth did move from under our feet, and we could not realize any success in our affairs. And secondly their *Khalifa* took out a magic wand and defeated the *Ahrar* group with it. This magic wand was *Tehrik-e-Jadid.* Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] gave this weak and poor community of Ahmadis a comprehensive program and action plan in which he implored his community to adopt simple ways of living. All the Ahmadiyya households adopted an austere lifestyle. Even those members who could not meet their expenses because of lack of income cut down on their expenses further and started saving and offering these sacrifices for *Jama'at.* With these efforts, within a couple of years the *Jama'at* had enough funds that Mirza Sahib spread a lot of literature against us and weakened us. Along with this simple life, a great program for scholarly, moral and organizational training was implemented, so that within a few years, he turned a poor and weak community into a well-trained and strong force, and it was this force which defeated us on every front. He extended this magic wand and the great benefit gained was that they established their mission houses in many countries, and became an international community."

In 1953 another wave of riots and persecution arose -- there were agitations all across Pakistan against the *Jama'at.* The government of Pakistan was behind this turmoil.

Politicians and government officials openly declared that they would crush Ahmadiyyat. They promised that this wave of persecution would be even more severe than anything the *Jama'at* had known before. Two high-level members of the *Jama'at*, Hadhrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad[ra] and Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad[rh], were both arrested and given jail terms of 1-5 years and fined 500 rupees, but *Alhamdulillah,* by the Grace of Allah, they were released after only two months.

After the start of the New Year in 1954, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] was brought in front of Judge Munir's Court of Inquiry and interrogated from January 12th until February 17th. Listening to the responses of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra], one communist remarked about his testimony, that if that was the true teaching of Islam then this Islam will certainly be accepted in the future. One respected person said that Mirza Sahib was the only true scholar in Pakistan. Another lawyer commented that he was afraid that Justice Munir would become *Mirzai.*

Persecution of Ahmadis was not only directed at the rank-and-file. One of the greatest statesmen Pakistan ever knew was the well-known Ahmadi Chaudhary Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra]. Right from the beginning, Zafrulla Khan Sahib[ra] was a right-hand man of the founder of Pakistan, *Qaid-e-Azam* Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Zafrulla Khan was the first foreign minister of Pakistan in 1947. How disgraceful it was that whenever the opposition to Ahmadiyyat came to a boil, this demand was always made that Zafrulla Khan should be removed from this important office. What was the result of this hue and cry? Zafrulla Khan Sahib went on to preside over the World Court of Justice at the Hague.

Majlis *Ahrar* -- the same *Ahrar* which conspired against *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya in 1934 -- instigated and led the riots against *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya in 1953. And one of their ringleaders, Syed Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari, was always in the forefront. He used to work crowds into a frenzy through his fiery speeches against the *Jama'at*. Do you know what happened to him? It was a great sign from Allah. In his old age he retired to a mud house in the city of Multan. Once a journalist came to visit him and inquired from him if anyone ever came to visit him now that he was no longer in the public eye. Pointing to his tongue, he responded, "Son, as long as this barked the whole subcontinent was listening and loyal to me, and since it stopped barking no one knows where I am."

One opponent of Ahmadiyyat and Masih Mau'ood[as] expressed his malice this way: "All the books of Mirza should not be thrown in an ocean, but into a burning clay oven. And not to stop there, but if at all possible, his name should not be mentioned in any Islamic or non-Islamic history record."

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] wrote more than 80 books based purely on his love of Allah, the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet[saw], and solely in defense of Islam – books that his opponents could not answer but could only decry, burn and ban. Yet look at the immense blessings of Allah. These same books – many of them translated in multiple languages -- can be read from almost anywhere in the world at alislam.org, thus fulfilling yet another aspect of the famous revelation to the Promised Messiah[as] where Allah said: "I shall cause thy message to reach the corners of the Earth." And because of these books and the efforts of Ahmadis all over the world to spread the message of Islam, pure souls are entering the fold of Ahmadiyyat in large numbers. It is impossible to mention all the opposition faced and all the progress made by the *Jama'at* in so short a time. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood's[as] couplet shines brightly on the truth of his claim.

Fa Subhan Allazee Akhzal
A'adee...

Each and every Ahmadi present today is a witness to this fact -- that whenever opponents planned to harm *Jama'at,* or hurt us emotionally, or threatened us with loss of life and wealth, each Ahmadi responded to the call of the *Khalifa* with a renewed zeal, love and determination to withstand the opposition.

Ahmadi families offered their fathers, brothers, wives, sisters and children, their income and wealth without reservation to Allah and proclaimed that Ahmadis would always submit to Allah's will.

And for the past 121 years. . . and on May 28th. . . and to this day. . . we have never wavered! And for all the tomorrows of Ahmadiyyat. . . we will never waver!

Another period of turmoil manifested during the era of the third *Khilafat,* when the National Assembly of Pakistan in 1974 declared Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* non-Muslim. There were numerous riots against the Community. It was a time of terrible trials. In many different cities, towns and villages Ahmadis were boycotted. Ahmadi properties were burned and looted and many Ahmadis were viciously martyred.

Because of all the religious and civil unrest, which was blamed on the Ahmadis of course, Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad[rh], the Third *Khalifa* of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* was called before a closed-door session of the Pakistani National Assembly to answer allegations against the *Jama'at*. A delegation of four Ahmadi scholars headed by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III[rh] appeared as ordered for a dialog which lasted eleven days. The best and the brightest ulema who were all opposed to the Promised Messiah's[as] teachings and his Community, tried their best to prove their case against Ahmadiyyat. It is significant that, although publicly claiming victory in their arguments and religious "proofs" against the truth of Ahmadiyyat, the record of the proceedings which details what transpired has been kept sealed from public access since 1974.

One non-Ahmadi in his speech said:

"A liar *Khalifa* of a liar Prophet in their Assembly bested them with his arguments."

Consider the fate of the one who persecuted us and declared us non-Muslim. Look how God humiliated him in fulfillment of the revelation God gave to the Promised Messiah[as], saying: "I will humiliate him who tries to humiliate you." The ignoble person so deserving of God's punishment was none other than Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, who was hanged.

In 1984, the dictator of Pakistan, General Zia-ul Haq, tried to stop the progress of the Jama'at by enacting the infamous Ordinance 20, under which Ahmadis could not call themselves Muslims. If any Ahmadis presented themselves, directly or indirectly, as Muslims, they could be thrown in jail for three years and/or fined. What is that Ordinance?

You cannot call yourself Muslim, you cannot offer salat, you cannot act like Muslims, you cannot call your place of worship a Masjid, you cannot call the Azan, you cannot propagate your religion as Islam, you cannot call your spiritual leader a *Khalifa*, you cannot say *Assalamo Alaikum,* you cannot recite the *Kalima.* In a nutshell, you cannot do or say anything considered "Islamic" in nature. Those who violate this ordinance will go to jail.

This dictator in his speeches vowed his determination to eradicate Ahmadiyyat, calling it. . . a cancer upon the body of Islam. . . and that it was essential that an operation be conducted at once to root out this evil cancer once and for all, (*na'uzubillah*). These were the plans of the government of the time.

At that time Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] migrated from Pakistan and after settling in London initiated the *Jama'at's* Tabligh and training plans. He could not possibly carry out these tasks in Pakistan under Ordinance 20. Khalifatul Masih repeatedly admonished General Zia to end his persecution of Ahmadis, but Zia did not pay any attention.

Hazoor finally issued to the dictator and other *Maulavis* a *Mubahila* – a prayer duel. Allah informed his *Khalifa* about the impending demise of the dictator. Hazoor in his Friday Sermon mentioned that if Zia and his minions did not stop their persecution then he should know the Allah's crushing machinery had been set in motion and he would be severely punished. Not even a couple of days had passed when General Zia's plane exploded shortly after take-off and crashed in Bahawalpur. A raging inferno ensued and his whole body was burnt to ashes and all they could find were parts of his false teeth and this is what they ended up putting in a coffin and burying.

The Promised Messiah[as] wrote in one of his couplets:

جو خدا کا ھے اُسے للکارنا اچھّا نھیں

ہاتھ شیروں پر نہ ڈال اے روبۂ زارو نزار

The one who is of God, it is not right to challenge him. O foolish

one! Do not put your hands upon the lions of God.

Even though Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] migrated due to this Ordinance 20, God had additional reasons for his migration. Within this apparently forced migration, a great blessing was manifested. Many doors for the progress of *Jama'at* were opened. Here is a glimpse of the successes during the time of turmoil and tribulations in the *Khilafat* of Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad[rh].

The opponents apparently thought that once the *Khalifa* leaves Pakistan, the nerve center of the *Jama'at* will be cut and Ahmadiyyat will die off without their Spiritual Leader. Their belief that *Jama'at* cannot exist without the *Khalifa* was correct -- every member of the Community, in obedience to *Khilafat*, devotedly serves and offers his or her life. How Allah miraculously blessed Jama'at that through Hazoor relocating to London, Muslim Television Ahmadiyya was born, and because of MTA the *Khalifa* who left Pakistan was now residing in each Ahmadi heart through the daily MTA broadcasts that now came into every Ahmadi home.

Once again, the plot to stifle the spread of the message of the Promised Messiah[as] back-fired on the opponents. Now, instead of the Ahmadiyya *Khalifa* being heard only in Pakistan, he was being heard in every corner of the globe. Even the opponents acknowledge this – decrying the inability of the oil-rich Arab Muslim states to produce a worldwide Islamic satellite TV channel as the "*Qadiyanis*" have done.

With MTA broadcasts of 2,724 programs, the Islamic content being televised all over the world included the Friday Sermons of Khalifatul Masih IV[rh], Question-and Answer sessions in English, *Tarjamatul Qur'an* classes, homeopathic sessions, Urdu language classes, children's education classes, *Mulaqats* in various languages, Hazoor's[rh] Arab Discussion Group, as well as timely responses to objections and attacks from our opponents. All produced by untrained volunteers.

In 1982, Ahmadiyya com -munity was established in 80 countries and by 1984, around the time of migration to London, the Ahmadiyya community was established in 91 countries, and by the time the fourth Khalifa[rh] passed away in 2003, the *Jama'at*, *Alhamdulillah,* was firmly established in 175 countries. In the first year following the migration in 1984 there were 32 new mosques were built in the world, and during the 19 years since then, more than 13,600 new mosques were established by *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya. More Ahmadiyya *Tabligh* Centers were also opened. In eight countries of Europe in 1984, where there were only 16 *Tabligh* Centers, which increased over 19 years to 148 Centers in 18 countries.

In the United States, the number of *Tabligh* Centers increased from six to 36. In Canada in 1984 where there were only five mission houses, that number increased to five more. And in Africa there were 68 *Tabligh* Centers in 14 countries and now, after expanding to 25 countries, the number of Centers has risen to 656.

Lord Eric Evebury in a speech at *Jalsa Salana* UK in 2002 said, "I especially honor your leader Mirza Tahir Ahmad under whose wise leadership you were saved from difficulties, and I am hopeful that under his leadership your community not only in Britain but also in the world will create a better future for the benefit of the whole world."

To put in clearer focus the Community's amazing progress because of persecution, here is one opponent's comments on the successes of Ahmadiyyat in Pakistan and abroad more than half a century ago.

In February of 1956, a well-known opponent of Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*, Maulavi Abdul Rahim Ashraf who was the editor of *Al-Mimbar*, wrote an article where he openly admitted that: "Our respected leaders with all their abilities opposed *Qadiyaniyyat*, but this fact is clear to everyone that the *Qadiyani* Community, even more than before, is stronger and larger. Those who opposed Mirza Sahib were righteous, connected to Allah, honest, scholarly and were huge personalities. Our well-meaning thoughts about Syed Nazir Hussain Sahib Dehlvi, Maulana Anwar Shah Sahib, Maulana Qazi Syed Sulaiman Puri, Maulana Mohamad

Hussein Batalvi, Maulana Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi, Maulana Sana Ullah Amritsari and other leaders, were all well-intentioned in their opposition to *Qadiyaniyyat*, and their influence was such that there are very few among Muslims of their high standard. But even though these words may be difficult for our readers (and *Qadiani* newspapers and magazines will happily quote me) but I am resigned to say that, in response to all these efforts, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya has increased in numbers in United India and even after the Partition, and not only has this group rooted itself firmly in Pakistan with its membership ever increasing, but their name is so well -known that high officials and scientists from Russia and America come regularly to Rabwah to meet with them. And even after the 1952-53 great campaign against them, *Qadianis* are working towards achieving a budget of 2.5-million rupees." By today's collection standard, this would not even equal the budget of the San Diego *Jama'at*! Remember, this testimony of our progress was from an opponent in 1956 and *Alhamdulillah Jama'at* Ahmadiyya has progressed tremendously since then.

As I have mentioned earlier, these storms of opposition and harsh winds of persecution have not died down, but continue still. This is, in fact, a Sign and a source of *Jama'at* progress. Just this year on the 28th of May in two of our mosques, in Lahore during Friday Prayers, Ahmadis in prayer were machine-gunned to death and grenades were thrown amongst them, resulting in nearly 90 Ahmadis being martyred with more than 100 injured. This happened only because of opposition to the Jama'at and false propaganda against Ahmadis that we do not accept Prophet Muhammad[saw] as *Khataman Nabiyeen.* This is what came to be known when one of the terrorist admitted that this is what he was told about Ahmadis and this is what was broadcast over the news.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] on *Eidul Adha* delivered his Sermon, where he said: "Today we have Ahmadis, who for the last 120 years, have been offering their lives, wealth, time and honor. *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya can never forget the sacrifice of Sahibzada Abdul Latif Shaheed[ra]. As the fanatics rained down stones upon him, his steadfastness demonstrated his great love for the Promised Messiah[as]. Therefore, as this act of sacrifice was recognized as a model by the Imam of the Age, we must all keep this model in mind that all those who have come later and have offered their lives, and are still doing so today, are upholding that highest standard of sacrifice made by Abdul Latif Shaheed[ra].

During this year 2010, those who believed in the truth of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] from the bottom of their hearts, 98 of them of them offered their lives. And through their sacrifice they have declared to the world that they were following in the footsteps of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad[saw].

Hazoor further said that the sapling that was planted by the Messiah of Muhammad[saw] has grown into a strong tree whose branches are spread across all continents and in 198 countries. How then can the winds of opposition possibly uproot this divine tree or harm it in any way? We have observed that, in the history of Ahmadiyyat, every sacrifice, every opposition brings about the fruit of success which is even greater than before. And during these times of increased persecution, the lives that the *Jama'at* has offered are not ordinary sacrifices. They presented such a great model of patience and steadfastness that their names will be written in the history of Ahmadiyyat in gold ink. Hazoor further said that, *Alhamdulillah,* after these martyrdoms thousands of *Bai'ats* have taken place around the world.

At the time of the Promised Messiah[as] a member complained that Ahmadis were in difficult conditions in his hometown and the opponents were persecuting them bitterly, so he requested prayers from Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as]. Upon hearing this Masih Mau'ood[as] smiled and said, "When you enter this community, you must act on its teachings. If trials don't happen, then how can one be blessed? The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] suffered for 13 years in Mecca. Neither do you know the difficulties that were experienced then, nor have you experienced them yourself. But the Holy Prophet[saw] always taught the companions to be patient. Eventually

all the opponents were ruined. The time is coming when you will see that these trouble-makers today will perish. Allah *Ta'ala* has decided that this *Jama'at* will spread in the world. Now these people persecute you because you are less in number, but when this *Jama'at* will be in the majority, then they will be silent. If Allah had so willed, then these people would not have persecuted you and would not have been born, but Allah, through them, wants to teach you patience. Our *Jama'at* is blessed to be under the Protection of Allah, and through suffering and trials, our faith will be strengthened."

Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] has said, "It is a mistake of these people and entirely unfortunate that they desire my destruction. I am that tree which was planted by the True Master by His own Hand. That person who wants to destroy me, his destiny is that he will become like Judas and Abu Jahal. O ye people, certainly you should understand that the Hand of Allah is with me, and will support me until my end. If your men and your women and your youth and your elderly and your younger ones and older ones all together pray for my destruction to the degree that your noses rot in prostration and hands get scraped and even then God will never listen to your prayers. And He will not stop till He completes his task and if no human supports me, then God's angels will be with me."

In another place, Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] said, "Do not think that God will waste you. You are the seed of His hand that was sown in the earth. This seed will grow and will flourish and its branches will sprout from all directions and then it will turn into a huge tree. Therefore, blessed is the one who keeps faith in his God's word and is not wavered by the trials that come in between. Because it is necessary for you to be in trials to come so that God tries you as to who is truthful in his pledge of allegiance and who is a liar. Those people who, till the end, will be patient and who will face the earthquakes of tribulations and will experience strong winds of accidents and nations will laugh at them and will mock them and the world will treat them with disdain, those are the ones who will be triumphant in the end and then the doors of blessings will be wide open."

Prophecy Regarding Mission Houses in America

"We sent one of our missionaries to America, who till now has not been given permission and has been stopped. But we will not stop because of this hindrance in America. America, she claims to be powerful, till now she has faced the worldly kingdoms and defeated them but has not faced a spiritual kingdom. If now it fights with us, it will find out that it will never defeat us because God is with us. We will preach in the areas outside of America and we will make them Muslims and then we will send them to America and America will not stop them. We are very hopeful that one day in America a voice will be raised:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

and it certainly will be raised.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] has said,:

"Godly communities' successes and victories are not achieved by deal-making, creating disorderly campaigns, haughtiness or arrogance but through humility and by constantly seeking Allah's pleasure. Insha'Allah these will taste victory, so this cruel persecution is temporary and is rapidly reaching its end. Many a Pharaoh came, many cruelties were done, and many a powerful rulers came but all of them got wiped out."

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Offering *Jumu'ah* Prayer With Two Participants

The question was posed that if there are two Ahmadis in a town, can they conduct Friday services or not?

The Promised Messiah[as] addressed Maulvi Muhammad Ahsan[ra]. He submitted that the congregational Prayer can be held with two, thus the Friday services too. The Promised Messiah said, "yes, you can do so. Previous scholars have mentioned three but if there is only one then he can make the count by lining up behind him his wife, etc."

(Al-Hakam, March 10, 1905)

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MY GOD, MY COMRADE!

Sayyarah Hikmat

Thorny is the path of life, I need Your Escort in this maddening wilderness!
Redress my grievance, cover me in Your mantle of Grace!
My days are in the yellow leaves!
May some breeze blow in my gloomy eves!

To You I implore for comfort and strength!
In the desert of my heart let the healing fountain start!
O God, I have hit the bottom of degradation!
I have been a victim of injustice, wrong!

I am bothered and bullied by the despots of the world!
O God! What is the cause of these hard hearts!
Can human beings be so selfish, Machiavellian!
Like a poisonous snake they recoil on you with poisonous fangs!

Spiritual disgrace stares from their face!
At small faults, they cause us torture and disgrace!
Grief given by God is borne with fortitude!
But, not the stab in the back given by our friends!

In the darkness of night, we hide the heart that bleeds!
But nightmares put their gall upon our wakeful days!
Sorry God! I don't like this world for the ludicrous charm!
It is an abode of hypocrites and sycophants!

It is just a mirage of foolish hopes and vain desires!
All life long we run after shadows!
We drift after wandering fireflies!
They lead us to nowhere, if somewhere!

I would like to spend the rest of my days, like a hermit, in a secluded place, away further from this noisy world!
Where birds and cuckoo coos hidden in the branches of the trees!
Where dolphins dance in a mood of merriment!
I would like to sit on the silvery beach, in a contemplative mood of serenity and peace!
And, listen to the music of waves as they sing the glory of God!

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MARTYRDOM OF AHMADIS IN INDONESIA

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] stated in his Friday sermon delivered on February 11, 2011:

In 2001 an era of intense animosity against Ahmadis started. Papook Hassan Sahib, who was 55 years old, was martyred in June when he bravely faced 100 attackers who had come to destroy our mosque. He sustained serious injuries and passed away on his way to the hospital. In 2002, government workers joined these people. Two mosques were attacked and homes were damaged. In July 2005 our central mosque was attacked and damaged while the police looked on. Later the government sealed off the mosque. In September 2005 our detractors attacked five *Jama'ats* and damaged mosques and did looting. 86 homes were damaged, some were burnt. In October 2005 the enemies attacked 3 Ahmadi homes and caused damage. In February 2006, 23 homes were damaged, 6 homes were burnt and shops belonging to Ahmadis were damaged and their cattle were stolen. More than 100 Ahmadis became homeless and the area had to be abandoned. In 2007 one of our mosques was felled and 26 Ahmadis had to move to another area. In September 2007 one of our mosques was attacked three times and damaged. In December of the year, two further mosques were attacked and damaged. The police sealed off 9 of our mosques. Such have been the circumstances but Indonesian Ahmadis have remained resolute and steadfast in their belief. The recent martyrdoms are a continuation of the persecution but this time the local as well as international press has covered the incident. Hazoor gave details of the three martyrs.

Tubakos Chandra Mubarak Sahib Shaheed: He was 34 years old, a born Ahmadi who leaves behind a widow who is 5 months pregnant. He had intended to give his unborn child's name for *Waqfe Nau* which will *Insha Allah* be now processed. He was a very sincere Ahmadi as is his entire family. He was very regular in offering his Prayers in congregation at the mosque. A day prior to martyrdom, his wife had asked him not to go to his *Jama'at* work to Cikeucik citing her pregnancy as the reason, but he chose to go. His task was to drive *Khuddam* to Cikeucik. At the time of the attack he was inside the mission house and was in the front. The opponents brutally attacked him with knives, and then they suspended him and continued to beat him. Later they took him down and hit him with sticks and disfigured his dead body. His younger brother identified his body by a mark.

Ahmad Masono Sahib Shaheed: He was 38 years old and leaves behind a widow and 4 children. He was introduced to Ahmadiyyat in 2000 during the visit of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh]. He studied Ahmadiyya literature and took his *bai'at* in 2002. Prior to *bai'at* he did not treat his parents well but after becoming an Ahmadi he developed spiritually as well as morally and his parents were very happy with him. Once he was in dire need of money to pay his rent and meet some other expenses. He prayed intensely. A man came by and asked him to do a job and he could meet all his expenses with the remuneration he got. At the time of the attack he was inside the mission house. He was brutally attacked with knives, machetes and sticks. His body was brought out where it was continually beaten while the police looked on. His body could also not be identified initially.

Roni Persani Sahib Shaheed: He was 35 years old and had taken his bai'at in 2008. He leaves behind a widow and two daughters. Prior to *Bai'at* he was a murderer, robber and gambler and was introduced to Ahmadiyyat by one of the other martyrs. He saw a dream about a holy person who had a turban on. When he saw a photo of the Promised Messiah[as] he recognised the face as the one he had seen in his dream. He read Ahmadiyya literature and took his *Bai'at* in 2008 which transformed his life. His wife was astonished at his spiritual transformation. God enabled him to not only give up all his past evils, but accept Ahmadiyyat and then go on to attain the status of martyrdom. He became regular in his *Salat* and also offered *Tahajjud.* He was very regular in his *Chanda* and was keen at doing *Tabligh*; his *Tabligh* resulted in many

Bai'ats. He often expressed his wish to die as a martyr. He was also attacked with knives, machetes and sticks. His body was brought out, abused and disfigured.

These are the people who have been given the glad-tiding of Paradise by God. They are shining stars of Ahmadiyyat, may God elevate their status and grant steadfastness to their families and be their Protector and Helper. May He strengthen the belief of every member of the Indonesian *Jama'at*.

Regarding one of his visions, the Promised Messiah[as] had mentioned people of far-away places who would follow the path of Sahibzada Abdul Lateef Shaheed. Hazoor said these martyrs are also among those people of 'far-off' places, many among whom have never even seen the *Khulafa* of Ahmadiyyat yet their sincerity is commendable. In the vision the Promised Messiah[as] saw that in his garden a tall branch of a fir tree is cut off and he asks for it to be erected in the ground once again so that it can grow and bloom. He explained that he interpreted this as God giving us many substitutes of Sahibazada Abdul Lateef Shaheed. The martyrdoms in Indonesia have left exemplary models and shown that those living thousands of miles away from Qadian have proven the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah[as]. Those of us left behind should self-reflect over the state of our belief at all times.

After each martyrdom we should pledge that not only will we not allow our belief to be wasted by the persecution, rather we will enhance it and will not take any such action which may discredit our traditions and our patience, which may discredit our loyalty to our country. As mentioned before, the Indonesian *Jama'at* played a role in forming the country. An Ahmadi is loyal to whichever country he or she lives in. This loyalty demands that we pray that may God release our countries from the clutches of oppressors and may He never impose such rulers on us who do not know mercy. We resort to law for worldly planning but we never take the law in our hands, we only turn to God. Our reliance is more in turning to God than in legal remedies. Our reliance is on His mercy. And now, as before we will turn to Him. Hazoor advised to always say the prayer: **'...O our Lord, pour forth steadfastness upon us, and make our steps firm, and help us against the disbelieving people.'** (2:251). May not even one of us ever falter in his or her steadfastness.

The Promised Messiah[as] said that the time is near when these mischievous people will not be seen any more. He said if God so willed these people would not have inflicted pain, and those who inflict pain would not have been born, but God wishes to teach patience through them.

Hazoor prayed that may each Ahmadi march onwards with prayers and patience in order to attain our objective. May God grant us steadfastness and may He destroy every mischief-maker and may we witness fulfilment of the promises of the Promised Messiah[as]. Our detractors have no personal animosity against us. It is because of their enmity towards the Promised Messiah[as] that all this is taking place. May God make the enemy a cautionary sign and those among them who are not to reform may be punished by God. Hazoor said prayers should be made for the injured of Cikeusik, two have been discharged from the hospital but three remain hospitalised. Addressing Indonesian Ahmadis Hazoor said, the prayers of all Ahmadis are with them. Hazoor is receiving letters expressing concern and anxiety about Indonesian Ahmadis, the images of the barbaric persecution have pained every Ahmadi. May God keep every Ahmadi in His protection and safe from every evil in future and may the enemy's plots rebound on him.

Hazoor said he would lead the funeral Prayers in absentia of the three martyrs. In addition he would also lead funeral Prayer for an Ahmadi young man who lost his life in the suicide attack in Mardan, Pakistan on the Punjab Regiment. He was receiving training there. He was the nephew of two of our *Waqfeen e Zindagi*.

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DECEMBER 17, 2010

TODAY 61/44

THE SUN

OPINION

POINT OF VIEW

What if Jesus were to visit Pakistan?

By Imam Shamshad A. Nasir

If Jesus Christ descended from heaven as expected by both mainstream Muslims and Christians, what would be his fate were he to travel to Pakistan? Would he be welcomed with open arms or open hostility?

According to the laws of Pakistan, anyone who claims to be a prophet, messenger or a reformer of any kind can be forbidden to preach, arrested and charged with blasphemy.

In 1974, under pressure from Islamic religious groups, the Pakistani National Assembly amended the country's constitution to declare that anyone claiming to be a prophet, messenger or any kind of reformer is false and cannot be true because the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam, is the last prophet.

To put teeth in this amendment, the Pakistani penal code was amended in 1984-1986 (by the order of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq, then the dictator of Pakistan) to criminalize the practice of Islam by those deemed non-Muslims, specifically Ahmadi Muslims. Penalties under the blasphemy laws range from fines to imprisonment and even capital punishment.

This law is unjust on more than just legal grounds because no political assembly has any religious authority or right to interfere with anyone's chosen religious beliefs. As a result of these laws, religious minorities in Pakistan are not only deprived of their basic human right of religious freedom, but these laws are frequently and grossly brought to bear to settle personal grievances and obtain by legal theft the property and resources of others.

If, for instance, a Sunni Muslim hankers after his Shia, Christian, Hindu, Sikh or Ahmadi neighbor's store, home or other property, all he needs to do is accuse that person of blasphemy against Islam or the Prophet Muhammad or desecrating the Quran and an angry mob and/or the police will appear to dispense vigilante justice.

The grist for this mill of hatred comes from the belief by mainstream Islamic scholars that, in deference to the honor and status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, no prophet or reformer can appear after the Holy Prophet.

Contradicting this is the previously stated belief held by virtually all Muslims and Christians that Jesus Christ, whom Muslims view as the Jewish Messiah and whom Christians view as the literal Son of God and/or God, will come again.

Confusing the situation still more is the belief of mainstream Muslims that the Imam Mahdi (the God-guided spiritual leader) will appear after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but that he won't be a prophet. This begs the obvious question then of just who will be guiding him? Not God?

Another point to be remembered is that without any divine authority or guidance, Jesus (peace be upon him) would be unable to reform anyone in Pakistan.

How would Jesus preach if he is an ordinary person and not a reformer, a prophet or a messenger? Let us clearly examine and understand this issue.

The Holy Quran clearly states: "Jesus was sent as a prophet to the Children of Israel" (3:50), but the so-called Islamic scholars insist that Jesus (pbuh) will teach Islam to the Christians and Jews after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Why oppose the blasphemy laws in Pakistan anyway?

On May 28, an attack was made on two Ahmadi Muslim mosques in Lahore, martyring more than 80 Ahmadis. Religious terrorism against Ahmadis is the result of Pakistan's 1974 constitutional amendment and its 1984-1986 blasphemy laws, none of which have any Quranic validation to defend or support them. Ahmadi Muslims seek only to be true Muslims in the eyes of God, rather than in the eyes of people. God knows all hearts.

I urge all my American Christian friends that if Jesus does in fact come, do not let him go to Pakistan or he will be put to death again, because this is the law of Pakistan.

Ahmadi Muslims believe that the Second Advent of the Messiah has been fulfilled in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, who claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi (the guided one from God).

It is truly sad and ironic that in Islam it is considered perfectly OK to believe that the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi will come, but it is not OK to believe that they have.

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Al Akhbar
is published by the
Orient Publishing
Tel: (626) 852-2722
Email: AlakhbarUSA@yahoo.com
P.O. BOX 1034; Glendora, CA 91740

Al Akhbar
Arab American Newspaper
الأخبار المهجرية USA

1300 Ahmadi Muslims gather for peace at 25th annual West Coast Convention in Chino

Chino, CA --

For the past quarter-century, in keeping with their motto, "Love For All -- Hatred For None," the Ahmadiyya Muslim community members from the West Coast of the U.S. have quietly and peacefully held their Jalsa Salana (annual convention) during the Christmas season to strengthen their spiritual bonds and offer special thanks to neighbors and civic leaders for their friendship and support.

exceptionally well. We were very blessed in this regard. And, that seems like a special blessing of God at everyone of our annual conventions, anywhere. "

The convention had a very involved program for the three days.

The Friday's opening session was presided over by Dr. Hameedur Rahman, a national vice president for the West Coast region of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

ral Disaster Become Divine Decree," "The Spiritual Revolution brought About by the Promised Messiah" and "Putting into Practice the Ahmadiyya Motto: Love for All – Hatred for None."

Part of the Covention Opening Session Attendees

The Opening Session and Recitation from the Holy Qur'an

Imam Shamshad Nasir

Molana Naseem Mahdi

Dr. Naseem Rahmattullah

Al Akhbar
Arab American Newspaper
الأخبار USA المهجرية

Keeping with tradition, the Silver Jubilee 25th annual West Coast Convention started with the Friday prayer and sermon from Imam Shamshad on December 24th. The three-day convention, which ended Sunday, Dec. 26th, was held at the Baitul Hameed Mosque at 11941 Ramona Ave. in Chino.

This year the community hosted over 1300 attendees from 35 chapters in the United States, with some members venturing from five other countries. The attendees also included members of the Ahmadiyya Community's national executive leadership along with other dignitaries and guests. The theme for this year's convention was: "Muslims For Peace and Loyalty."

Jonathan MA Ghaffar, local assistant secretary for interfaith dialogue and community outreach showed amazement with the outpouring of attendees.

"Thirteen-hundred Muslims converge in one place for three days and generate no live "breaking news" or calls to the police? What? How can that be?" Mr. Ghaffar asks rhetorically. "The answer is simple: real Muslims are peaceful," Mr. Ghaffar completes his own thought.

Imran Jattala who was charged with the responsibility of organizing the event dealt with the record-breaking storm immediately prior to the event. Because skies cleared only a day before the event, it seemed as if all arrangements happened in one day only.

"No, actually it took us a lot longer. We started weeks in advance but what everyone else observed was only on the last day activity due to the rain," explained Imran Jattala. "For the most part, every thing flowed

The opening session started with the Arabic recitation and English translation of a selection from the Holy Qur'an, followed by a poem in Urdu with it translation in English.

Dr. Hameedur Rahman welcomed the participants and presented the opening remarks, explaining the importance and background of the Ahmadiyya annual Conventions. Dr. Rahman concluded his remarks with silent prayers.

The convention featured numerous speeches on various spiritual and historical topics, including: "The Holy Quran: Guidance for the Righteous" and "The Holy Prophet Muhammad's Message of Peace & Loyalty."

There were several break-out sessions during the three days which focused on issues such as the moral training of children, and the importance of successfully getting and staying married.

The visitors listened to Quranic verses with translation, talks about the peaceful message of Islam, directions for the younger members of the community as well as poem readings.

The Lajna Ima'Illah, or the women's auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, hosted a women-only session on Saturday morning where topics related to the perspective and responsibilities of women were addressed. Speeches during this session covered themes such as: "A Woman's Role in Marital Harmony," "The Importance of Absolute Faith in God" and "The Holy Prophet Muhammad as an Example of Personal Accountability."

Some of the subjects dealt with in the Saturday session for the men were: "When Does a Natu-

Attendees also enjoyed meeting old friends and making new ones while visiting the book stall, tea table, Humanity First disaster relief agency booth and the exhibition hall being tended to by local members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Hot meals were served three times a day to all the "guests of the Promised Messiah" (a traditional moniker by which convention-goers are referred to) consisting of eggs and other breakfast fare in the morning, with lunch and dinner featuring spicy basmati rice, pita bread, chicken curry, beef or goat dishes, and Dahl, or lentil soup. Tea and dessert were also served.

The event was attended by senior national office-holders of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, including Imam Naseem Mahdi, National Vice-President and Missionary In-charge, and National Vice-Presidents Dr. Naseem Rehmatullah, Wasim Malik, and Masoud Malik, National General Secretary. The national President of the Ahmadiyya women's auxiliary, along with several other members of the National Executive body were also present and many delivered speeches at the convention.

Shamshad A. Nasir, the Imam of the Baitul Hameed Mosque and the Ahmadiyya missionary for the Southwest U.S. region, delivered a talk about the progress and spiritual successes of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the wake of fierce persecution over its 122-year history.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's U.S. West Coast annual conventions have been held semi-regularly since 1982 at various locations in Southern and Northern California -- the very first West Coast convention was at a Masonic Lodge in San Francisco with 75 members attending.

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Ahmadiyya Muslims Gather for 25th Annual Convention

January 14, 2011 – INDIA-WEST

By a Staff Reporter

CHINO, Calif. — The Silver Jubilee 25th annual West Coast Convention of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community began Dec. 24 at the Baitul Hameed Mosque here with a prayer and sermon from Imam Shamshad Naseer and concluded three days later on Dec. 26.

This year, the community hosted over 1,300 attendees from 35 chapters in the United States, with some members venturing from five other countries. The theme for this year's convention was "Muslims for Peace and Loyalty," according to a press release.

The opening session was presided over by Dr. Hameedur Rahman, a national vice-president for the West Coast region of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

The opening session started with the Arabic recitation and English translation of a selection from the Holy Qur'an followed by a poem in Urdu with its translation in English.

The convention featured numerous speeches on various spiritual and historical topics, including "The Holy Quran: Guidance for the Righteous" and "The Holy Prophet Muhammad's Message of Peace and Loyalty."

There were several break-out sessions during the three days which focused on issues such as the moral training of children, and the importance of successfully getting and staying married.

The Lajna Ima'Illah, or the women's auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, hosted a women-only session on the morning of Dec. 25, where topics related to the perspective and responsibilities of women were addressed, said the release.

Speeches during this session covered themes such as "A Woman's Role in Marital Harmony," "The Importance of Absolute Faith in God" and "The Holy Prophet Muhammad as an Example of Personal Accountability."

Imam Shamshad Nasir addressing the 25th annual West Coast convention of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

Some of the subjects dealt with in the Dec. 25 session for the men were "When Does a Natural Disaster Become Divine Decree," "The Spiritual Revolution brought About by the Promised Messiah" and "Putting into Practice the Ahmadiyya Motto: Love for All – Hatred for None."

The event was attended by senior national office-holders of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, including Imam Naseem Mahdi, national vice-president and missionary in-charge; and national vice-presidents Dr. Naseem Rehmatullah and Wasim Malik; and national general secretary Masoud Malik.

The national president of the Ahmadiyya women's auxiliary, along with several other members of the national executive body, was also present and many delivered speeches at the convention.

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The Ahmadiyya Muslim community's U.S. West Coast annual conventions have been held semi-regularly since 1982 at various locations in Southern and Northern California. The very first West Coast convention was at a Masonic Lodge in San Francisco with 75 members attending.

And while West Coast Ahmadiyya Muslim conventions have been held since 1982, there have only been consecutive annual gatherings since 1986, thus establishing the 2010 event as the community's Silver Jubilee milestone.